THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

The Oldest Literary and Family Paper in the United States.—Founded August 4, A. D. 1821.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1878, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress.

Vol. LVIII. PUBLICATION OFFICE, No. 726 Sansom Street. PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1878. $2.00 a Year in Advance, Five Cents a Copy. No. 22.

A CHRISTMAS SONG.

BY P. P. A.

Ring the joy bells gaily,
Tolling hearts rejoice,
Let no sound of sorrow
Dull the gladdening voice.
Fill the wassail goblet,
Pledge with friend and foe,
Let not malice mingle
With its kindly flow.

Pile the board with plenty,
And thou shalt not lack;
Feed the old and hungry,
God will pay thee back.
In the daily blessing,
In the mighty rest,
He who giveth freely,
Ever giveth best.

Lift the crackling Yule-log,
As in days of old;
Let no needy neighbor,
Perish in the cold.
Christmas comes but seldom,
Only once a year.
Let us bid it welcome,
With our warmest cheer.

Welcome all who need it;
So shalt thou be fed,
With the food that fails not,
With the "daily bread."
They may never pay thee,
Yet their debt shall be
Doubly, trebly rendered,
In eternity.

PENKIVEL;

—OR—

The Mystery of St. Eglon.

CHAPTER XIII.—[CONTINUED.]

"There was no offence meant, I assure you," replied the lawyer. "Mr. Singleton is a very inoffensive young man; and, considering his position, it was not strange that he should express himself with anxiety respecting Miss Sherborne. You see, the will is made in every way in her favor. Old Mrs. Singleton, during her last years, was touched by remorse for her refusal to succor her niece, and she wished to make her some reparation; but in doing this, she has been somewhat unjust to her nephew."

"I don't perceive that," said Maurice.

"When you understand the matter better, sir, you will," responded Mr. Brydges. "Mr. Singleton was brought up as his aunt's heir, and had every expectation of inheriting the whole of this fortune. Now he finds he cannot even have the half, unless he takes a wife who may not suit him, and if the lady refuses him—a thing Mrs. Singleton never anticipated,—he will be completely disinherited."

"Miss Sherborne certainly will not marry Mr. Singleton," cried Maurice, chafing considerably at the mere idea.

"Then all I can say, sir, is that the will is a very unfortunate one for him," resumed Mr. Brydges. "And the more so that his circumstances are very sad. His mother made an unhappy second marriage; her husband was a showy, fine looking man, but he turned out a thorough scamp. He deserted his wife and children, after spending every penny she owned, and Tom Singleton has maintained them ever since out of his small salary as a clerk in a London bank. His father left a very good property, but unluckily, he bequeathed a life interest in it to his widow, and this her husband has sold and mortgaged to the last halfpenny. Our firm looks after Mr. Singleton's interest, but while his mother lives, we can of course do nothing to help him. But we can speak highly of his honor and integrity. Miss Sherborne will be acting most cruelly and without reason if she refuses to fulfil her aunt's wishes."

"She is the best judge of her own happiness, sir," replied Maurice, stiffly.

"You will put us in communication with Miss Sherborne, sir, I hope?" said Mr. Brydges.

"Certainly," returned Maurice; "but not until I have first consulted her wishes."

"It is a pity there should be any delay," continued Mr. Brydges, with a perplexed air. "You perceive, sir, the law will make delay enough. Miss Sherborne must fully prove her identity. We shall require the certificate of her baptism: we have searched the churches here for it in vain, and in fact, on Mr. Singleton's behalf, we shall exact undoubted proofs that Miss Sherborne is the person she represents herself to be."

"You shall have the proofs," said Maurice, shortly. "Will you inform me what is the amount of the fortune left by Mrs. Singleton?"

"About twelve thousand pounds, invested in the funds," returned Mr. Brydges. "Nothing, you see, very enormous, yet a great deal under present circumstances to Mr. Singleton."

Maurice sighed; he had hoped the sum was smaller; he had wondered whether he could compensate the hard-toiling young man for the loss of Madeline, but he saw now that that idea was hopeless.

"Have you any objection to give me Mr. Singleton's address?" he asked.

"I might answer you that I would consult his wishes first," returned Mr. Brydges, smiling; "but I will not. I will give you his address frankly, knowing, as I do, how anxious he is to hear some news of his cousin."

"And here is my address," said Maurice, as he handed him his card. "I assure you, if, for the present, I withhold Miss Sherborne's, it is in deference to the wishes of those who have befriended her during her deserted childhood. She felt bound to obey them, otherwise she would have written to you at once on seeing your advertisement."

Here the interview ended, and during the remainder of the journey to London, Maurice certainly found sufficient subject for unpleasant cogitation. With her peculiar views of justice, what would Madeline say to this will? How would she act when she found her engagement to him virtually disinherited Thomas Singleton? And he, not a man rich and in no necessity, but a hard-working, striving clerk, maintaining a sickly mother and three half-brothers and sisters. Would she bear to disappoint them, and plunge them into misery? She, whose severe notions of justice had so often startled him, would she accept her own happiness now, at such a cost to them?

Maurice trembled as he asked himself the question. Then again his courage revived as he remembered that she loved him, and she owed him a duty too, which neither honor nor justice would permit her to ignore.

"But I will tell her the whole truth," he said; "I am bound to do that."

Accordingly he was no sooner at home than he indited her a long letter, in which he gave her the fullest details of his interview with Mr. Brydges. This done, he set off in a hackney coach for that dull, dismal suburb, and the small row of mean houses wherein resided Thomas Singleton and his mother.

We have already visited that uninviting spot; but its aspect was forlorn indeed when Maurice stepped within the four bare walls and confronted the sickly woman, and the three hard-faced children. He glanced round the empty room and took in all its misery; then his eyes fell with deepest pity on Mrs. Rathline's wan looks and trembling hands, quivering feebly over their work. Next he gazed upon the children seated on the floor; and then he started in sudden amazement, for he saw the queer oblong box they were using for a table was a hawker's knapsack.

CHAPTER XIV.

In prosperity, when every material comfort surrounds the body, and ease, and luxury, and elegance are such daily accompaniments of life, that no note is taken of them, and they are received as carelessly as the blessings of sleep and sunshine, the mind, clogged by all this honey, grows fretful, and exaggerates small evils till they swell to great misfortunes. It is then that "the grasshopper is a burden," the day a weariness, and the night a woe. It is then that a real sorrow falling upon the weakened soul shatters strength and courage, and lying in the dust, it lets the wheels of time and fate go over it, crushing it into helpless despair.

Perhaps Lord and Lady Crehylls had been too fortunate. All good gifts, all pleasant things, had been theirs, till maybe they had learned to deem happiness their right, and if they had thought of human grief, it was only as a dim, uncertain shape, from whose fiery touch they were exempt. Hovering now over the tranquil sea of their content were two shadows, beneath which the quiet waves grew troubled. And yet these shadows were but one, and that one—Madeline.

Hitherto Lady Crehylls had found loving hands to remove every roughness from her path—hitherto her sky had been untroubled; it was not strange, then, that her father's illness, and the slight coolness between herself and her husband weighed upon her heavily, and seemed to her unaccustomed to heart burdens harder than she could bear. How sharp the shadows are in sunshine we all know, it is in the sombre day we scarcely heed them; and there are lives so bright that if the quivering of a leaf do but let fall a shadow on their path, they shiver, and cry aloud for pain and fear.

"If only my father were well, that I might ask him for those letters of Geoffrey's," sighed Lady Crehylls to herself, as she sat by his bed side. "I know I should be happier if I read them. This foolish suspicion would die away then, when I found they were only letters written to a child."

Meanwhile the estrangement between husband and wife grew wider. Lord Crehylls was in a gloomy and irritable mood. It was an infinite annoyance to him, that one of these Sherbornes—people whom he had striven to put out of his memory for ever—had like a shadow been constantly at his elbow. That a Sherborne should be beneath his roof, that a Sherborne should sit at his table, and pry into his face, and listen to his words, and be in ignorance of her presence, vexed him like a thorn in his side. He looked on the deception Mr. Lanyon had put on him in an ugly light, and hated its aspect. This sense of wrong which he cherished against his father-in-law, deepened the shade of coolness and silence between him and his wife.

"I cannot complain to Agatha of her own father," he said to himself, "especially while he is ill; and in fact I cannot have any explanation with her, while Madeline is here. I sicken at the thought. I must wait, till the girl is gone out of our sight for ever, before I can speak."

Thus he held his peace from day to day, although he saw his wife's face pale, and her eyes heavy; and all this while he treated her with that tenderness and kindness which says so plainly, "I will do all things for you, except the one thing you wish—I will not open my heart to you. I will talk to you on all subjects, except that single one on which you desire me to speak, and on that I have laid a seal you must not touch."

Without a word being said, Lady Crehylls understood this perfectly. If she but drew near Madeline's name, she felt that her husband surrounded himself with a barrier of ice, which she dared not pass, as she saw him rise and walk away abruptly. It was in vain, after this, that his voice took a tenderer tone in addressing her, as he showed her some lover-like attention, which at a happier time would have brought to her lips a ready smile of thanks; it seemed to her now a deception, and she turned away with grave sorrow in her eyes, or anger unspoken trembling on her lips.

Lady Crehylls had not the least idea that she was jealous. Jealousy comes to its victims in so many shapes, that perhaps it was not singular she did not recognise the fact that his wife was jealous, of all women in the world, of Madeline Sherborne! And yet apparently Lady Crehylls had cause. Why did she so often find her husband and Madeline conversing almost in whispers, and why when she came did the conversation stop suddenly, while all her nerves felt jarred by the air of mystery around them? Nor was this all. Madeline surely discussed some secret too with her father, for when she entered his room she found his face flushed, and heard the quiver of his eager voice; yet there also her presence brought silence and embarrassment, and the same barrier of reserve like a wall reared itself between her father's heart and hers, as between her and her husband. Who had a right to the love and confidence of these two men, she or Madeline? Were they her father and her husband? or were they bound body and soul to this strange girl, this interloper, who had stolen into their affections with crafty and quiet step?

Such questions as these coursed through Lady Crehylls' brain like a fire, and she began, with the impatient misery of a first grief, to fret for an opportunity to utter her wrongs. Was not this castle her own home?—was she not mistress here? Why then should she bear the presence of a woman who destroyed her happiness so cruelly? Was she so powerless that she could not show Madeline Sylvester that she was an unwelcome guest? No, surely not. This power at least was left her, and she would use it at once. And from the hour that Lady Crehylls made this resolve she treated Madeline with a studied coldness and reserve, most galling to a girl of her proud and bitter nature. She little knew what she was doing. Before this Madeline had looked upon her own dull, instinctive dislike of Mr. Lanyon's daughter as a feeling she ought to quell, an injustice which Agatha did not merit. Now all was changed; she considered her dislike was justified, and she counted her childish instincts truer than her womanly reason.

"Have you told your wife who I am?" she said to Lord Crehylls one day, almost a week after Maurice's departure.

"No, indeed," he answered, abruptly. "I should be sorry to do that."

Madeline steadied her trembling lip, and then turned towards him resolutely.

"Then may I ask why she treats me with studied insult? Is it by your orders?" she demanded.

Lord Crehylls looked pained and surprised.

"Do you suppose me capable of laying such a command on her?" he said in an angry tone.

"I see and feel every hour in the day," returned Madeline, "that her manner towards me is full of marked coolness, and I imagine of course that her husband sees this also, and approves of it."

"You do me the honor to make a great mistake," replied Lord Crehylls with stiff courtesy. "I hope I am incapable of rudeness to any guest beneath my roof."

"Even a Sherborne?" said Madeline, mournfully. "Lord Crehylls, you can understand how painful it is to me to remain here; surely, then, it is a rudeness to add to that pain, by showing me relentlessly how unwelcome I am."

"I am sorry any one has done so," returned Lord Crehylls, with the same cold politeness. "But I do not disguise from you, Miss Sylvester, that I shall be glad when Mr. Lanyon will consent to your departure. Your stay here is not adding to the happiness of Lady Crehylls and myself."

Madeline grew very white, she had scarcely expected this. As Miss Sylvester—as Mr. Lanyon's ward, Lord Crehylls hitherto had treated her with every deference and kindness. Now he was coolly telling her to leave his house, and this change she imagined she owed more to Lady Crehylls' dislike than to his knowledge of her true name.

"If you cannot guess what it has cost me to do my duty to Mr. Lanyon in remaining here," said Madeline, with mournful pride, "then I will not tell it to you. Only, you must surely know that it is at his request—almost delirious entreaty—that I have stayed."

"I am fully aware of that," replied Lord Crehylls, stiffly. "I can only repeat, I am sorry your stay is so painful."

"I am sorry Lady Crehylls has made it so," answered Madeline, with burning cheeks. "It was to nurse her father and to soothe him I remained. That ought to have gained me her consideration and kindness; but it has weighed as nothing with her. By his bed side, as elsewhere, she has treated me in the same cold way. If this is due to my unhappy name, it is cruel; but, if, as you say, she is ignorant of that, then it is insulting, and I shall demand an explanation."

"A man is bound to take his wife's part, even if she be in the wrong," said Lord Crehylls, in a softer voice; "but I assure you, Miss Sylvester, Agatha's behavior is as much an enigma to me as to you."

"It shall not remain an enigma to me," returned Madeline. "I must and will know the cause of it. And since I hate deceptions of all kinds, I shall be glad, Lord Crehylls, to speak to her openly. I want to tell her who I am. I am anxious she should know that it was by her father's wish——"

Lord Crehylls here interrupted her eagerly, and said, in a firm voice, "No, Miss Sylvester; I must entreat you to do nothing of the kind. I hold you to your promise. I would not let Agatha know anything of this for the world."

He stopped abruptly, for standing at the doorway, with face white as snow, was Lady Crehylls herself.

"What is the secret you would not let me know for the world?" she said, in a forced voice.

"If it is a secret, it is evident you are not to know it," said Lord Crehylls, trying to laugh. "It is a new greenhouse I am going to build for you, Agatha."

Madeline walked silently from the room, and Lady Crehylls followed her with eyes half scornful, half tearful.

"Don't trouble yourself to tell falsehoods Geoffrey," she said, suppressing her tears. "I know perfectly well you were not talking to that girl of greenhouses."

"That girl!" repeated Lord Crehylls. "I wish, with all my heart, Agatha, you would be more civil to Madeline. You are not treating her well. She has complained to me of your rudeness."

Poor blundering Lord Crehylls, how fearfully he increased the breach by this blind remark!

"Has she dared complain of me to you?" exclaimed his wife. "And have you listened to her? Geoffrey, this is too much Madeline Sylvester must leave Crehylls at once."

"Are you mad, Agatha?" cried her husband in dismay. "You cannot treat your father's ward in this manner."

"She is a wicked girl!" said Lady Crehylls, bursting into tears. "I shall tell my father so. She and I never liked each other as children. She has a hard, cruel, designing nature!"

"I don't see it," said Lord Crehylls, a little dryly. "She has had more to suffer than you can dream of, Agatha. You are unfair to her. She is going away soon. Be at least civil to her for the short time she remains here."

"You demand too much in asking that," returned Lady Crehylls. "I cannot be a hypocrite. As I feel towards her, so shall I act."

"I don't perceive what cause you have to feel unkindly towards the girl," continued her husband, gazing pertinaciously out of the window. "I only know she complained very bitterly to me of your manner, and I should like you to alter it. I don't often find fault with you, Agatha, but I must say, I consider it unfair to bully the poor girl, just because she remains here against her will, to nurse your father."

Lord Crehylls took Madeline's part because he was conscious that he had been ungracious to her himself, and he would willingly have seen his wife make amends to her for this; he was utterly ignorant that his words to Lady Crehylls were as barbed arrows quivering in the flesh. He waited a moment for an answer, and finding utter silence, he looked round and found she had quitted the room. This sudden silence and emptiness sank down upon his heart, and a strange chill fear ran through all his frame. His wife's tears had hurt him, yet he had hidden his pain under a careless manner. Feeling he could not be frank, he dared not speak soothingly to her lest he should betray the irritation of his own thoughts, so he had held aloof from her sorrow, and spoken coldly. Now she was gone, he wondered at himself.

"Is the name of Sherborne always to be a curse to me?" he said, bitterly. "What madness possessed Mr. Lanyon to bring this girl here?"

CHAPTER XV.

"I have a letter from Maurice," said Madeline, bending over Mr. Lanyon's pillow. "Shall I tell you what he says?"

"Read it, my dear," he answered, feebly and the hollow eyes looking into hers grew feverish and restless with a strange excitement. Then Madeline read, in that calm, quiet voice, peculiarly her own, the history Maurice had written of his visit to Lymington, and all he had learned there respecting Mrs. Singleton's will. Mr. Lanyon listened to every word with an intense earnestness, not interrupting her once, till with deliberate fingers she had refolded the letter, and laid it on her lap.

"A hundred a year," he said, looking eagerly in her face; "is it worth while, for the sake of that small sum, Madeline, to blazon abroad your name, and quit all the ease and honor, and comfort of your present position?"

"It is worth while," answered Madeline, "because it will be independence and truth. There is no honor, no comfort, in my present position; it is false and full of misery and I am insulted every hour."

"Insulted!" said Mr. Lanyon, and his worn face was lighted up with sudden anger. "Who dares insult you?"

"Your daughter," returned Madeline. "And your son, Lord Crehylls, has just told me to quit his house. Can you part with me? Will you let me go to-morrow? I am so miserable here."

"They are both mad!" exclaimed Mr. Lanyon, in an excited voice; "mad and ungrateful. I have suffered too much for them. They are bound to obey me, and they shall."

"Calm yourself," said Madeline quietly. "You shall not quarrel with them on my account, neither will I consent to remain here on sufferance, even at your petition. If you wish it, I will return to Penkivel to-morrow, although I would rather go to London."

Mr. Lanyon looked into her pale resolute face, and seemed to feel that it would be useless to expostulate further.

"I am grieved you should leave me, Madeline," he answered; "none nurse me as you do." She stooped and kissed him, and he went on in a voice slightly tremulous, "But I am better, and I will soon follow you to Penkivel. You must go there, Madeline, and postpone your journey to London until I can accompany you."

"I will do as you wish," she said. "But these papers for which Maurice asks, can you give them to me? I should like to send them to him by this post."

"I have them in my desk he replied. "Hand it to me, Madeline, here is the key on my watch-chain."

Madeline placed the old-fashioned, brass bound desk on the bed, and took the key in her hand, scarcely looking at it; but as she stooped to put it in the lock her heart gave a sudden bound, and her face grew white as marble. The small, strange, heavy-looking key was the exact counterpart of the one given to her by Michael Polgrain. But she uttered no exclamation Remembering, even at that moment of surprise, Michael's warning, she repressed the cry that sprang to her lips, and bending down her head to hide the whiteness of her face, she watched Mr. Lanyon as his weak, trembling fingers drew forth the papers for which Maurice had asked.

"I found them at St. Eglon's Hut," he said, "and seeing they were family papers—certificates of your parents' marriage and your baptism among them—I sealed them up, and have never opened them since. You had better forward them to Maurice at once, my dear."

She took the packet mechanically, but her eyes were riveted on the desk, and her spirit was in a dream. One of those swift revelations of memory had come back to her, which spring upon us at times from the forgotten past at sight of some old relic, dimly familiar, disused perchance and broken now, yet, as it stands before us, dragged irreverently into view, it speaks with the passionate voice of youth or the innocent laughter of childhood, and its very dust seems sacred in our tearful eyes. Thus, at sight of this desk, as it lay open before her, Madeline saw herself at St. Eglon's Hut a child, standing by her father's side, eager and curious, while he was showing her the trick of a secret drawer lying below these yellow, faded papers. But while she gazed and wondered, Mr. Lanyon closed the desk and locked it, and placed the key again beneath his pillow.

"You cannot marry this young Singleton, Madeline," said Mr. Lanyon as he did this.

"No," she answered, with eyes still fixed and dreamy. "No, that will be impossible."

"Doubtless he is in every way beneath you," continued Mr. Lanyon—"will you put back the desk, Madeline?—and I dare say he will be quite satisfied if you give up to him the hundred a year, which your aunt bequeaths to you."

"But I have no intention of giving it up to him," she answered, taking the desk in both her hands. "I want it for myself. It is mine, and I shall keep it."

"As my daughter," said Mr. Lanyon, "and living with me at Penkivel, you will want nothing, Madeline, till Maurice Pellew makes you his wife, when you will go to him with a fortune befitting the education and the position I have given you."

Madeline had laid the desk on a little table near the door, out of the sick man's sight, and now, as he uttered these generous words, her heart smote her painfully, and she turned back to the bed side.

"I will not wait—I will speak now," she said to herself; "for I leave him to-morrow, and who can say when we shall meet again? We will talk of this legacy another time," she said aloud, "when you are well enough to bear it. I want to tell you now, before I go away, how sorry I am for all my hardness and pride. I want to tell you that I am grateful, though I have not appeared so. I want to tell you, that if I have not shown you all the love held so silently in my heart, it is because I have thought you have not cared to see it, and I have feared to weary you. But I will not leave you in sickness without saying, that you are dearer to me than any one else on earth. And through all my pride, and passion, and sullen misery, I have loved you as a child loves a father. I have not been so wicked, so hard, so unloving as you thought."

"Madeline! Madeline!" cried her sick and woeful listener, stretching out his hand to grasp hers—"I never thought so cruelly of you, my dear child."

"And whatever may happen in the future to part us," continued Madeline, a little feverishly, as she bent her head till her cheek touched the hand she held, "I want you always to think of me as loving you. If you have ever thought the contrary, forget that now, and remember me only as you have seen me since your illness—repentant, remorseful and grateful."

"My dear, I will think of you as you wish," said Mr. Lanyon. "But we shall not be parted long; I shall soon follow you to Penkivel. It is strangely cruel in Agatha——"

He stopped, looking at her pitifully, as though begging her to spare him the pain of blaming his daughter; but Madeline took no heed of this mention of Lady Crehylls.

"As for me," she said dreamily, "wherever circumstances may drive me, or whatever fate may impel me to do, I give you this promise, that deep down in my heart I will keep my love for you intact. It is the best and purest feeling I have," she added, mournfully; "for, Heaven knows, amid all this blight and wrong, my soul suffered mildew, and it has grown full of evil spots."

There was a little bitterness in her voice, but it died away in the last words, and she kissed him tenderly as she felt.

"Heaven bless you, my dear," murmured the old man. "But this is not a good-bye. I shall see you again in the morning. You must forgive Agatha and Geoffrey, Madeline. They are spoiled children, blinded by too much happiness. You must not be angry."

"What does my anger matter?" she asked, "or their unkindness? Let the son and daughter do what they may, I shall always remember their father was my dearest friend on earth, the dearest friend I shall ever have."

With these words she was gone, lingering a moment at the door to look again upon his face. Then she took the desk in her hands silently—it scorched them as she walked along—and went with a swift step to her own room. Here she closed the door and locked it, weeping bitterly.

"The dearest friend I have on earth," she repeated, "the dearest friend I shall ever have. And when I open this, perhaps he will be my cruellest enemy, or I his, and we shall behold each other face to face no more. Has the dead father, for whose sake I do this, ever done for me what this man has?—was he as good, as tender, as wise a friend to me as this friend? Oh no, no, never. Oh what shall I do? Where does my duty lie? Spare me, spare me, heaven."

She flung herself down, with her face lying on her arm, that she might not see the hated desk, and thus resting motionless, there poured over her hot heart a thousand contending feelings. All her affection was with Mr. Lanyon—she owned it now; she could feel it here in her struggling bosom, which seemed rent with dry sobs. And this dead father, whose reckless, passion scarred face she could dimly remember, seemed nothing to her, in comparison with the living friend, whose generous hand had plucked her from misery. What, if his motive, as she suspected, had not been all generous, all good, why should she seek to look too keenly into it, seeing the result to her was the same? Might she not let things rest as they were? Her action would rescue no one from shame and sorrow; but herself; her father was dead, she could not help him; and if she were content thus, did it matter what secret lay hidden in the past? In London, she could take her own name. Who would notice it there, or connect it with the dark story of St. Eglon's Hut? And her aunt's legacy would make her independent of all the world—no need to touch Mr. Lanyon's money, or bear the insolence of his children. But with that thought there came a reaction, and there swept over her a flood of bitterness in which pride and courage sprang to life again, and all her weakness vanished.

She seized the desk, and drew it towards her with fierce eagerness, then paused again. What if it were Mr. Lanyon's desk not her father's? Keys were often alike, and desks too. How could she ever avow that she had stolen Mr. Lanyon's desk, and with another key unlocked it to pry into his secrets? But as she asked this question her heart sank, for there came with it, like a clear ray, a vision of her father's long, thin, womanish hand showing her the trick of the secret drawer, and she heard his words again—"There is not another desk in England, Madge, like this one. It is an invention of my own, and I got it made by a poor carpenter, who, while he lives, will never get materials again to make another desk like mine."

Then Madeline rose up deliberately and put the desk upon her knees.

"If I find this drawer," she said, "I shall know it is my father's; if not, I will not look at a single paper here, but I will shut the desk again, and carry it quietly back to Mr. Lanyon's table."

With that she turned the key firmly, and the desk was open: then she turned the key again, once, twice, thrice, and with a sharp click there sprang out against her hand a narrow drawer, from which there gazed up into her startled eyes the beautiful face of her mother. The miniature was set in gold and gems, and on the back, beneath a crystal, lay a long coil of bright brown hair, on which there rested, in small diamonds, the monogram "M. S."

Madeline took the picture in her hand, noting all this rapidly, then she gazed for a moment on the lovely features, which seemed to smile at all the woe and misery they had made, and with a sigh she set it down again, hiding the face. The next instant she held betwen her trembling fingers a sealed letter, addressed "To Madeline, my daughter;" and here her courage failed her for a time, and rising, she placed the desk upon a table, and paced the room with a hurried step and eyes that blazed with a strange fever.

Falling on her knees, she broke the seal at last, and with the letter spread before her, she read it, still kneeling and faint with fear. And as she read, the veil that covered the past dropped from her eyes,

and she saw her father innocent and wronged, perishing in prison, while the man for whose guilt he had died stood before the world unstained, unsuspected, rich, honored and happy.

Amazement and horror kept her silent for a time; then, with straining eyes, she read the letter again and again, slowly taking in the sense, slowly believing the dreadful words, and realizing their truth, and more slowly still understanding her own terrible position.

An avenger! Great heavens! what was she called upon to do? Must she denounce this careless, happy man, who hid his crime under a cloak of gaiety and laughter, and whose daily life, apparently so open and kindly, made him a favorite with rich and poor? Why, the first word she spoke against him would slay Mr. Lanyon, as surely as though she pierced his heart with a sword. Who was Mathew Carbis, that she should deal death and misery around her to avenge his traitorous blood?

Alas! it was not his blood—it was her father's. And seizing the letter again, Madeline fixed her eyes on it in agonized silence, shivering in every limb. All the joy she had thought to feel seemed dead and cold; it sank lifeless before the pain and horror which chilled her veins. Then as though it were a relief to break the blank silence quivering breathlessly around her, she read the letter aloud, in a low and trembling tone, listening to it, as if it were another's voice she heard, and not her own.

"Madeline,"—so ran the letter—"I have been told to-day that Matthew Carbis has been found in the wood slain. They suspect me it seems. Now, whatever may happen to me, mark this, child: I never touched the man; my hand never struck him. I saw him lying by the brook-side, and lifted him, then—whether wisely or unwisely, I know not—I left him. I neither hated the man nor loved him; and I know your mother's heart too well to be jealous of Mathew Carbis. She adores wealth and rank; she has fled from her home, and I pledge my life she is gone with no poor man. Who quitted this place on the same day she did? Ask that, and when you hear the answer, judge for yourself. Ask, too, who was most jealous of Mathew Carbis—he or I? Or, stay: let the letters I have found in your mother's desk answer that question. They speak in no uncertain word: they ring with as mad a passion as ever was felt by man. People say he is a boy: at eighteen we are not boys; and, boy or not, he can give this fair, false woman all the luxuries and gauds she loves. I do not say they are gone together; Mr. Lanyon is too watchful for that; but they will meet abroad, and live abroad, hoping for my death.

"Mr. Lanyon has hated me from the first—remember that always, Madeline. Twenty times he has asked me to leave St. Eglon's Hut. But I had the law on my side, and so refused him carelessly enough. Then he tried to bribe me; and, that failing, he used threats. When it came to these, I swore I would remain till the last hour of my seven years' lease was run. You see I was careless then; I did not think my wife so lost, that she would listen to a boy. When Carbis came, he taught me better—he showed me the truth. I say this to do him justice, though I never liked the man; and then I was half sorry I had not left St. Eglon's Hut. But mark the selfishness, Madge, of this man Lanyon from the beginning. He only feared for his ward, the young lordling. It was to save him that I, a poor man, ruined in purse and in happiness, was to leave the home I had found down here, and shift about penniless, from place to place, from misery to misery. What was that to him, so that Geoffrey Crehylls was free from the wiles of the gambler's wife?—that was the name he gave me; and your mother's name, your mother's honor, were nothing to him either. His tongue has been the busiest in uttering the lying slanders spread here of her and Carbis. This, too, is done to shield the young lord from blame and more than blame—from suspicion of the truth; and if my blood be needed to save this silly youth, Mr. Lanyon will take it ruthlessly. I am poor and defenceless, wrecked in character and in fortune; he is rich and powerful, and all men speak well of him. If he fastens this murder on me, and says, 'Walter Sherborne did this deed,' all the country round will cry the same. Gaping peasant, drunken squire, and ignorant justice, all will follow the great man's lead. Only let him point a finger at me, and I have no more chance for my life than if I were wrecked in mid-ocean, clinging to a straw for my only stay. Who will dare to speak a gentle word in behalf of a bankrupt stranger, when the owner of Penkivel and the master of Crehylls—he is master there—is his enemy, and has sworn that he shall die?

"Oh, I understand it all. I see through his tactics for years to come. He means to marry his silly, soft-eyed daughter, to the young lord; and to gain that noble end, he would crush many a better man than Walter Sherborne.

"Madeline, you are a child now, but when you read these words you will be a woman. Then I call upon you to avenge me. If it be possible I will plant you in the house of my enemies to be to them a firebrand for ever. Remember my injuries and your own. Your mother has deserted us, and the brainless, passionate youth with whom she has fled will return hither in honor and wealth, to marry Agatha Lanyon, while she, dishonored, miserable and forsaken, will perish in some foreign land. Remember it, Madeline, and when you strike, strike home. And if the memory of your father's face ever returns to your young heart sorrowfully, call up with it the bitter truth that Mr. Lanyon persecuted him to save Geoffrey Crehylls—accused him of a crime he never committed, to save Geoffrey Crehylls—and if he tries and condemns me, he will do it to save Geoffrey Crehylls; and this he does for the sake of his puny daughter, whom he loves to distraction. To ensure her happiness he will make my child fatherless, her name a disgrace, and her history a blank.

"Alone and forsaken of all, I write this by your little cot, Madeline, where you lie sleeping unconsciously; and perhaps when you read it you will wonder why, foreseeing my fate, I did not flee. My dear, Mr. Lanyon's spies surround me at this moment, and the people on every side are his slaves. Moreover, I confess it; I do not care for life. For me the play is played out; and it, in a grim farce and pretence of justice, these men finish the drama with a trial, which will be to me a mockery, I shall laugh, and laughing, die and escape them. They will not hasten my death one hour. Betrayed and deserted reckless, and half mad, I have resolved to 'shuffle off this mortal coil,' and leave a world in which the hollowness and treachery follow us even to the grave's brink.

"Farewell! little one. I do better for you in dying than I could in living. And I leave you this legacy—my innocence, my love and my fame. If a day should ever come when you can do justice, do it in my name, remembering these are my last words—It was the hand of Geoffrey Crehylls that struck down Mathew Carbis! And if you suffer and I suffer, it is because Aubrey Lanyon sacrifices us on the altar of his idol—his sickly, spoiled child.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ANGELS OF TWILIGHT.

BY E. M. S.

Hollows of purple with golden hem
Have folded themselves in the clouded West;
There are dews on every daisy-stem,
And the rustling grasses sigh of rest.

The lilies that droop by the misty lawn
Are snowy-hooded and sweet of breath;
The young moon sings her silver horn
Where the star of twilight waketh.

The toil and the heat are over now,
My soul shakes off its torpor dumb,
I lave the earth-damps from my brow,
And lift mine eyes: behold! they come—

They come! sweet dreams that had slipped away,
Voices of peace that were drowned anon,
Visions unseen in the glare of day,
And saintly shapes from the times agone;

And holy thoughts of holiest things,
Like spirit-songs from the breadthe above,
And gleams of light from the shining wings
That circle the throne of the Lord of Love.

Angels of twilight, soft and calm,
They raise no voice, they lift no cry,
But their pinions drip with light and balm,
In the halls of the soul, as they flutter by.

Yonder is home! the whisper comes,
And the stars repeat it through the night;
Here upon earth are tents and tombs,
But there is home, and love, and light.

Angels of twilight! come to us,
Here in the dusk, when the day is dead;
Bring to us higher thoughts, for thus
Our worn, world-weary hearts are fed.

JUST SAVED.

BY P. HENRY DOYLE.

Jasper Jocelyn was a stern, unfeeling man. Left an orphan almost from the cradle, he had bravely fought his way in life, and was proud to say, had become wealthy through the efforts of his own right hand. "The world would have kept me a pauper," was his favorite expression, "but I am rich in spite of it."

How he had ever wooed and won the meek, shrieking woman he called wife, was among the mysteries. No one had ever known the grim trader to smile even, and a gentle word had never crossed his lips. What he called "rule" and "duty," were his sole guides of speech or action, and neither of these permitted the least approach to levity. Perhaps—and this theory found many supporters—her womanly pity for the lonely, friendless man had forced her heart to choose him.

Yet, hardly had the sacred words made them one than he showed his character. Careless of society himself, he ordained that she, too, should forego its attractions. The poor lady obeyed. At first it may have been hard to bear. In time, however, children came, and her household world seemed less narrow and gloomy. The old bloom returned to her cheeks, and something like the songs she once sung would trill from her tongue, looking at the faces or listening to the prattle of her babes.

But Jasper Jocelyn felt no change—or, at least, showed none. He knew the names of his boy and girl well enough to order them from the room if they disturbed him, but he ignored their longing for a kind word and approving smile. Comfortable in the icy atmosphere of his own soul, he cared not or saw not, how it chilled and blighted them.

And even as they grew older, he was no more awake to his responsibilities. He might justly have been proud of the handsome, fair-haired Alfred, and felt his heart warm towards smiling, bright-eyed Maud, but emotion apparently did not belong to his rule of faith.

Such conduct could only have one legitimate result. They learned to dread his coming, and his footsteps in the hall was the signal for moody, constrained silence. With the daughter, less ardent, it became a sort of second nature, but the mother's watchful eye saw that in her boy's breast, it caused a chafing spirit of opposition that needed but occasion to develop into open war.

And this came at last. While Jasper Jocelyn did not neglect giving his son the education his future career demanded, he failed in matters that some might deem just as essential. He forbade him that intimate association with his fellows, which is a necessary condition of college social life. The holidays came and went, but not without disobeying his father's orders, could he extend invitations to his comrades to visit his home, or accept their own.

Nevertheless, in time he did disobey them, and took no pains to conceal his disobedience. At nineteen there is considerable self reliance in some characters, and Alfred Jocelyn was of this kind. He set his parent's authority at defiance, and spent—what had never happened before—Christmas Eve away from home.

The scene the following morning was a strange one. The father, impassively cold and stern, had waited through the night for his coming. When he did come, what passed could not be known, but the end was, he ordered the boy from the house, never to return, and he left.

Whether or not he felt remorse afterward for his conduct, he certainly manifested none. And neither his wife nor daughter, when he stated the fact, dared utter a remonstrating word. Jasper Jocelyn was king in his own house, and the maxim that the king can do no wrong, is very old indeed.

What became of Alfred after his departure was only surmised. He had returned to college for the balance of the term, and then disappeared. Some inquiries by letter from his mother to his class mates, elicited the fact that he was rumored to have gone to London, but nothing absolutely certain was known.

Another Christmas came and went, the darkest and dreariest that the Jocelyns—used to gloom—had passed. It did not only need the vacant chair to remind them of the missing one; for, in something like desperation, Mrs. Jocelyn had placed upon the mantel and on the walls, various little mementoes of her son, sacred to such seasons in the past. Her husband could not but notice them, and once it seemed as though he were about to order their removal, but looking at the thin face—daily growing thinner—opposite him, his heart may have smote him, for he let them stand.

Still another year rolled round, and again brought the eve of Christmas in its train. Jasper Jocelyn was grayer, and his tall form more bent, but the old sternness of purpose gleamed in his eye. His son's name never crossed his lips, nor was its mention made in his presence. He might be a homeless, friendless wanderer—he might even be no more among the living, but whether he cared or not the father gave no sign.

But had time healed the wound in the mother's heart, that her face beamed with such a pleasant light on this sad, yet happy anniversary? Had two years so dispelled the whilom yearning that she should half smile, as she placed her son's old-time gifts once more upon the mantel and about the room? There were the vases he had bought for her with his savings from his pocket money. With what a gentle hand she dusted their precious sides! And the little round-faced clock she had given him on his first term at school! Strange and out of place it seemed there, but clinging to it were memories that made it more precious than gold. It would hardly seem that such things at such a time should gladden her heart, yet gazing into the little mirror in the clock door, she caught herself smiling through her tears.

Again she nervously watched the questioning glance of her husband as he entered, and dreaded hearing what she saw coming to his lips. But if the former impulse to command the removal of the keep sakes crossed his mind, he did not utter it. A half-weary sigh only escaped him as he sank into a chair, and the silence that was now habitual, fell upon them all.

After supper why did Mrs. Jocelyn watch for her husband's customary retirement? He was generally the first to withdraw, but to-night seemed an exception to the rule. He continued reading while the city bells chimed eight, nine, ten eleven. Once his wife had spoken to him, and only received the querulous reply:

"I am not sleepy, and prefer sitting up."

Yet she was pretending to busy herself about the room, and her cheeks which, on his answer, strangely blanched, grew whiter and whiter. At last she left him and ascended the stairs, her lips moving as if in prayer.

Reaching her room she fell upon her knees and burst into tears. The weeping appeared to relieve her, and she stepped softly to the landing, listening. But she heard nothing save the rustling of the paper in her husband's hands. He was apparently as sleepless as ever.

For another half hour she waited, at times leaving the apartment to listen at the landing. Then whispering to herself, "He cannot come," notwithstanding her evident anxiety, her head leaned lower and lower till at length, worn out, she slept in her chair.

The striking of midnight did not wake her. Her slumber, indeed, was so sound that she did not hear the noise made by her husband closing up below. Nor did she hear his sudden start backwards as he stepped to bolt the window leading from the garden. Half bent towards the floor he listened intently. There could be no doubt of it. Footsteps, light and stealthy, were approaching the house from the road.

Jasper Jocelyn was known to be a wealthy man, but he was equally courageous. His grim face grew darker as the footsteps sounded nearer. More than once his place had been tampered with, but thus far the cracksmen had been foiled.

It needed but a moment to open a closet, draw from it a gun, the priming of which he examined, and then put out the light. Standing in the dark corner opposite the unbarred window, the weapon across his arm he awaited, death in his bearing, the coming of the stranger.

A strange stillness reigned, and the listener could hear the fingers outside fumbling for a hold. The window opened level with the garden, and the intruder apparently found some difficulty in grasping the shutter's edge.

It was not in human nature to continue calm in such circumstances, and Jasper Jocelyn felt a cold chill pass over him, and his arm trembled. But when the shutter opened he aimed at the dark form suddenly figured against the outline of light it made, and fired. There was a crash of broken glass and metal, a thrilling scream, and his wife confronted him:

"My God, Jasper, you have killed Alfred."

She had been awakened by the tapping at the window she was to leave open—the signal her son had agreed upon in the letter he had secretly sent her—and came down in the dark, thinking her husband had retired, only to witness the shot.

The gun fell from his hand, and in a moment he was in the garden, and carried the prostrate body inside. It needed but a hasty glance to show the face was covered with blood, though he was still breathing.

Placing him on the floor, while the agonized mother knelt beside him he lit the light. At the same moment the terrified Maud entered, and seeing the bleeding, would have dropped senseless, had not his arm supported her.

But he was not dead. The murder of a son was not to consummate Jasper Jocelyn's hardness of heart. Deceived by the outline of the clock upon the corner of the mantel against the light of the opening shutter, it had received the charge, and saved Alfred's life. Only a part of its iron frame, or the glass from the window, had forcibly struck and slightly wounded his forehead. This, with his fright, had caused a swoon.

It was not long before he revived and saw the tender, anxious faces bent above him—his father's, perhaps, the most careworn of all. And when the injury was attended to, and they had time to talk, there was, as you may imagine, much to say, much to repent, much to forgive and much to promise for the future.

Then only they learned that for two years he had been supporting himself as an amanuensis in a London office.

Jasper Jocelyn was the same stern man to the world he had always been, but he changed towards his own household. And in after years, when there were grandchildren in his house, it was his wish, for his own sake, that the old shot riddled clock should occupy its accustomed place, in remembrance of the time it had only just saved his boy's life.

MIGHTY SPANS.—To give an idea of relative distances, suppose a voyager through the celestial spaces could travel from the sun to the utmost planet of our system in twenty-four hours. So enormous would be his velocity that it would carry him across the Atlantic ocean, from New York to Liverpool, in less than a tenth of a second of the clock. Starting from the sun with this velocity, he would cross the orbits of the inner planets in rapid succession, and the outer ones more slowly, until, at the end of a single day, he would reach the confines of our system, crossing the orbit of Neptune. But though he passed eight planets the first day, he would pass none the next; for he would have to journey eighteen or twenty years without diminution of speed, before he could reach the nearest star, and would then have to journey as far again before he could reach another.

The Fortunes of Neddy.

A CHRISTMAS SKETCH.

It was a cold raw day in December, when boys and girls had just come home from school, and Christmas guests, accompanied by Christmas presents, were beginning to arrive in country houses. There was a fire of great logs burning on the hearth in the hall of Sandford Manor, dull sounds of suet-chopping came from the kitchen, mamma was here, there, and everywhere with her keys, Mary and Louisa busy helping her by stoning raisins beating up eggs, peeling apples, and other young housewifely duties, while George and Dick were looking out of the dining-room window, speculating on the chances of a fall of snow, after which they contemplated making a snow man of prodigious size in the garden, and racking their little brains in the attempt to choose what should be their Christmas gift from Uncle William. He had come down empty-handed the evening before, and told the boys they should have whatever they liked within reasonable limits, provided it was something useful, which could be enjoyed by both. Suddenly Dick had a bright thought.

"I've got it!" he cried; "let's ask him to give us a donkey."

"Oh, jolly!" exclaimed George; "that would be beautiful, we couldn't have anything better."

"Come along," said Dick, racing out into the hall, "we'll go and find him, and tell him we have made our choice."

The search for their uncle occupied the remainder of the short afternoon, and when he was discovered in the stable they both began talking at once, in their eagerness to point out twenty reasons why a donkey would be the best and most delightful present which could possibly be given them.

Meanwhile, about a mile away, Tom Turpin, the travelling tinker, had finished mending all the pots and kettles that needed repairing in the village, and was turning his rough-looking brown Neddy on to the common, to pick up his living as best he might till the following morning, while his master consumed his earnings at the "Rising Sun." He was not in the habit of ill-using the creature when he was sober, and certainly on this occasion had no intention of being unkind to him, but when seated near the blazing fire of the little inn, with a pipe in his mouth, and a foaming mug of beer on the wooden settle by his side, he quite forgot the existence of the patient animal that saved him many a weary tramp, and drew his little cart along the miry lanes. Sandford was on his regular beat, and the donkey was very well acquainted with the bit of road which lay between the common and the public-house. A keen north wind had been blowing for some hours, and as the dark day closed in the snow began to fall. Tom noticed during the evening, that incomers shook their coats and stamped their feet, but being well housed himself, he only remarked that it was seasonable weather, and drew closer to the fire, until at last he was roused to go to bed.

Poor Neddy found his quarters far less comfortable; it was not so bad at first, while there were a few thistles to crop and daylight enough to show him which were the juiciest of them, but even then it was more than pitch dark before he could get more than half a supper; and when he tried to find a sheltered corner for the night, the pitiless wind seemed to blow right through his shaggy coat into his hungry stomach, the snow-flakes got into his long ears, and shake himself as he might, he could not succeed in getting rid of them. Fatigue, however, asserted itself, and he had a nap, from which he awoke before long very cold and miserable, and found himself half covered with snow. To get up, utter a prolonged hee haw! try the effect of another shake, and grope about in the dark for something to eat was the work of a moment. But his nose only encountered a soft cold mass which reached half way up his legs, and made him wonder what extraordinary place he had got into. He kicked and plunged, and finally resorting to a donkey's ultimatum, laid down and rolled, but did not in any way improve his situation. So he wandered disconsolately up and down for hours, not knowing whither he went, till his hoofs struck on the road, which was comparatively free from snow, because the wind drifted it all in an opposite direction. On and on he trotted, guided by some memory of the way, till he reached the "Rising Sun," and stood blinking at the door of the tumble down wooden stable which leaned against its wall.

There was a lingering odor of hay about the place, but the door was shut, and the snow piled breast high against it, and Neddy was no better off than he had been on the common. An impatient kick or two roused Tip, the tinker's dog, who barked a vociferous welcome, the church clock struck seven, the cock crowed and the donkey brayed his loudest.

"Coming!" cried the landlady, arousing from her sleep, as she dreamed that a customer called her, and seeing the dim morning twilight, dressed and went down stairs to light her fire. Opening the shutters, she found the window choked with snow, and saw Neddy at the stable door with downcast head all powdered with the feathery flakes, and looking the picture of wretchedness.

"So 'twas you woke me up, was it?" said she, as she threw an old shovel at him; "be off, be off, or else I'll make ye!"

"Don't hurt the poor brute!" cried the kind-hearted Manor gardener as he passed by.

"'Tis the tinker's donkey strayed off the common, gie un a whack and send up the road," said she.

But Neddy wouldn't go," and Tip snapped viciously at the man's heels when he tried to make him, till he desisted, and went about his business.

He was soon hard at work, scraping away the snow between the hall door and the gate, and was accosted in a few minutes by Dick with the important question—

"John, do you know anybody who has a donkey to sell? Uncle William is going to give us boys one for a Christmas present."

"I think I see one just now, as id like a new master," was the answer.

"Where, where?" shouted both boys, and rushed off to fetch their uncle, who was allowed no peace till he accompanied John to the "Rising Sun," where Neddy still stood before the stable door.

A bargain was soon concluded, the money of which were on the tinker's side, and the comfort on the donkey's. Dick and George think there never was such a steed as theirs; they give him plenty of work, but he has an abundance of food, a warm shed to sleep in, and never need taste thistles again, unless he munches one on the sly, as a remembrance of the old days when Tom Turpin turned him loose on Sandford Common.

FLORENCE'S BET.

BY E. J. W.

"And so you have really and truly enjoyed this month in the country, cousin Clive?"

"I have, indeed, Florence; and the only thing that takes the sting from regret at leaving this dear old place, is the thought that you are to return with me, and that I may try my utmost to make you enjoy the next month as I have done this."

"To introduce me into society, to bring me out, I suppose?" said Florence. "But don't you think I am rather old for that sort of thing? I have seen twenty, cousin Clive."

"Without one season," said he; "without one admirer save the young men of the neighborhood, without a single offer of marriage, if I mistake not Floy. It is really shocking to bury your beauty for so long in such a remote place as this."

"As to offers of marriage, you are wrong," replied the young lady, laughing. "I have been honored by two, one from Mr. Sam Gregory, who, with a great deal of bashfulness and fidgeting about, asked my consent to be Mrs. Sam, and the other from the Reverend Westrop Deane. I didn't accept either."

Mr. Clive Hardinge lifted his hand with a gesture of disgust, and shaking his head replied dolefully, "Which it will eventually come to, perhaps, if you are not quickly lifted out of this mediocre class into that higher grade of society to which you are entitled by birth and position. I am very glad you are going to my mother for a little time; for although there is not, my dear cousin, a more perfect lady in all the metropolis than you, yet the constant companionship of the upper class of the here might in time cause you to forget that your birth precluded the possibility of your ever choosing a husband from among the young men of the families you are in the habit of visiting; for it would ill beseem the blood of a Hardinge to mate with one beneath her."

The hot blood flowed up in a torrent to the girl's face as her cousin uttered these words, for she knew that her mother had been so considered to demean herself when, two-and-twenty years before, she disobeyed the commands of a stern parent and stern brother, and proudly placed her hand in the strong, warm grasp of a man who had no sin against him but his poverty, his ambitious day-dreams, and his love for her. Then the struggle for life, for existence, the long years of suffering and sorrow of her early life, and subsequently the few hundred a year that some unknown relative, dying, left them.

She had never seen a single member of her mother's family, until a few months before, when Clive Hardinge, son of that brother who had sealed up his father's heart against his sister all the years of his life, came suddenly upon them in their quiet country home, was struck with the refinement that pervaded the atmosphere in which his aunt and cousin lived, and charmed with the rare grace and fresh beauty of the young girl. He hastened to create an amiable understanding between his mother and Mrs. Lysle, which, being easily effected, as Mrs. Hardinge entertained no feeling of resentment against a woman she had never seen, he suddenly fancied that the cool fresh breezes of Hillside might have a beneficial influence on his town-bred constitution; and therefore, without much circumlocution, he gave a broad hint to that effect. His aunt took the hint, and invited him. During his stay he and Florence had been a great deal thrown together, and, with a constant interchange of thought and opinions passing between them, grew in a month pretty well to know and appreciate each other.

Clive Hardinge was neither handsome nor young. Five-and-thirty years had rolled over his brown head, and left the wavy hair still brown, and the grey eyes undimmed in the fire of their manhood. He considered himself a middle-aged man now; and if any Midsummer day dream ever had tinged with a transient brightness the even tenor of his life, it was long since rolled up in the forgotten past. He took an interest in Florence, a deep interest, by reason of her beauty, her innocence, and her unprotection.

In the pause that succeeded his last remark his keen discernment instantly detected the insult he had unintentionally offered her, and with a slight embarrassment in his face, he bent forward, and said earnestly, "Forgive me, Floy; do not misunderstand my meaning. I am referring to yourself. You will be engaged before you leave the city. Mark my words."

The flush died out of her face, and a merry sparkle danced in her eyes as she said gaily, "What, in one month! My good cousin how quickly you are going to dispose of me! Make no such rash prophecy thou oracle of evil."

"But I do," said Clive. "Let me bet you a dozen pairs of gloves that my prediction comes true."

"Against what?" she asked.

"Against—a kiss," he replied.

"Sir, you surprise me!" said Florence. "But you would lose your bet."

"If I lose I will pay," said he, "and if you lose you must pay."

"But I shall not lose, cousin Clive," said Florence. "I am sure that none of the gentlemen to whom you introduce me will satisfy my fastidious taste."

"Wait until you see them, my dear child" said Clive. "You are very unsophisticated. I only fear they will find too easy ingress to that little untried heart of yours."

She laughed a laugh that had a ring of scorn in it, which made him look him with a puzzled expression, as though he could not quite fathom her, as she left the room.

* * * * *

Mrs. Earldale's saloons were crowded with fashion, beauty, and wealth. It was her last ball of the season, and the most brilliant she had given. Amongst the assembled ladies it was evident that one was the centre of attraction, the dazzling star around which the smaller stars ceased to shine. She was quite surrounded by gentlemen obtrusive in their attention and tiresome in their flattery. At last there was a break in the circle, and the low tones of the votaries of fashion ceased for a moment, as a young man of quiet gentlemanly bearing made his way up to the young lady.

"Miss Lysle," said he, "permit me to conduct you to the conservatory. You were speaking of—"

They had passed through the rooms, and she turned to thank him for bringing her away.

"But where is Clive?" she asked. "Are we not soon going home? I am so tired, Willie."

"Tired of dancing, or of the dissipation Florence, which?" he asked.

"Both," she replied. "I wouldn't live here for worlds, if I am to be dragged about night after night like this. I am going home in five days."

"Are you sorry, or glad?" he asked.

"I shall be glad to see my mother again," she replied, "but I shall be sorry to leave my aunt, she has been so kind to me—and—and cousin Clive."

"He is rather old, don't you think, Floy? something of the old bachelor about him—too old to marry in fact."

"Who—Clive?" she said. "He is not old, is he? I never noticed it. His hair is not gray, and his face is not wrinkled. He is very handsome, is cousin Clive."

If a very weary look and pale face denoted a handsome physique, Clive Hardinge certainly possessed it at that moment. He came forward to Florence.

"Would you like to go now?" he said, kindly; "my mother is already cloaked, and waiting for the carriage."

She quietly took his proffered arm, and extending her hand to Clive's friend, bade him good-night.

* * * * *

Miss Lysle sat at work in her aunt's morning room, the day before her departure home. She looked marvellously pretty, and so thought Clive Hardinge, as he made it his especial business to visit the room that morning. Clive carried a long narrow box in his hand, of blue enamel and gilt, and placed it under her eyes.

"The bet," Florence, said he. "Had you forgotten it? You have won it quite fairly—or will have done so to-morrow, for there remains yet one more day before the month is completed. Now will you tell me why you have so coldly declined the two offers of marriage you have been honored with since your stay with us?"

"I did not feel myself honored," she replied. "One was from a spendthrift and debauchee; the other from a brainless fop, who possessed but one idea in the world—that of admiring his own figure."

"But you have repelled admiration so persistently," said Clive; "others, who certainly admired you, might have——"

"Thank you, cousin Clive, for the bet. May I look?" interrupted Florence Lysle, as she put out her hand for the box.

"Certainly not, until to-morrow," was the reply; "but I mean to tell you now that I love you with all my heart and soul."

Her head drooped suddenly.

"I don't want your gloves, cousin Clive," she said.

"Why not?" he asked.

"Because I have lost my bet."

"Florence, have I won it?"

"Yes, and me too."

News of Interest

Red Bluff, Cal., has a boy, aged 13, who weighs 128 pounds.

Not more than half the church sittings in London are occupied.

The ocean commerce of the world is carried on by 37,000 vessels.

The London underground railroad is a favorite place for suicides.

This country manufactured one hundred million shoes last year.

The newest chatelaine bags are of seal-skin, with silver mountings.

Both rough and plain-surfaced suitings are worn by fashionable men.

English styles are adopted by American men who aspire to be fashionable.

Three sisters, living in Dyer county, Tenn., have given birth to sixty children.

White or cream-colored undressed kids are worn as evening gloves by the most fashionable women.

Dr. Cumming is still in London predicting the end of the world, but to rapidly diminishing audiences.

The latest invention reported in Europe is a phosphorescent paper, writing or print which can be read in the dark.

William Tyler, of Whitehall, Mich., has been left $100,000 on condition that he marries before he becomes twenty-one years of age.

Gentlemen's waistcoats button high for business and demi-dress suits, but open low, showing much of the shirt front, and at least two studs.

Irving, the English actor, is reported to be a most unpretentious person, and might be taken for a country person when seen on the streets.

A pretty holiday present for a gentleman, from a lady, is a handkerchief case with half a dozen well-selected silk or linen handkerchiefs.

Long scarfs or mantillas in the Louis XV. style, are made of black or white tulle embroidered, and are draped in the Spanish fashion about the head.

Hungary produces more horses than any other country of its size—2,158,000 for a population of 15,000,000. The Government has four breeding stables.

Beginning with a production of four pounds of tea in 1840, India now exports 40,000,000 pounds, and all the islands of the Indian archipelago are cultivating the plant.

A Vermont man owns a sheep with a perfect miniature mouth inside one of its ears—teeth and tongue complete—which opens and shuts when the sheep chews its cud.

A number of Italian cavalry officers have been trying the endurance of their horses to see what might be done in an emergency. Three of them rode 310 miles in 103 hours.

Among new fashions for household affairs is the one of having tablecloths and napkins with colored borders, embroidered by hand or with the color woven into the goods.

No fewer than 1,000,000 living creatures are on an average sent through the German Post Office every year, the majority of the packages containg canary and other birds and bees.

"Nothing Like It."

So say the ladies throughout Christendom, who have been so fortunate as to test the delicious efficacy and brilliant power of Laird's Bloom of Youth, a delicate cosmetic for the complexion, and a reliable and HARMLESS lotion for the skin, rendering it beautiful and brilliant, giving the cheeks the blooming appearance of youth, yes, like a flower in its richest of promise. As a dangerous counterfeit was in circulation, G. W. Laird has, at great expense, had issued by the United States Government a new label, one essential part of the artistic design embracing the United States Internal Revenue Stamp, printed thereon, which to counterfeit, will be liable to imprisonment by the Government itself. Ladies will please beware of worthless imitations. The genuine "Bloom of Youth" is sold at all druggists and fancy goods dealers. Depot, 53 John street, New York.

BOGEY.

BY W. S. H.

The hour is late, the mother from home;
Why tarrieth he in the waning light?
Down on the lawn where the laurels gloom,
He promised to come and sing to-night.
Hark to that rogue of a sister's cry!
Will the child keep ever a wakeful eye?
Sleep, tiny, sleep; Bogey will take
All little girls that he finds awake.

This naughty old Bogey, whenever he comes
Kills, as he rideth his terrible round
In the dead of night through the children's rooms,
And eats all the babies who won't sleep sound.
His big black eyes are aflame with light,
And all who behold him they shriek with fright.
Sleep, tiny, sleep; Bogey will take
All little girls that he finds awake.

"Nay," says the little one, "Lucy, nay;
For I've seen the Bogey from over the blind.
He looks not a bit like what you say;
He has big black eyes, which are, O, so kind!
I peep when his sweet sad voice I hear;
For he sings of love, so I need not fear."
Sleep, tiny, sleep; Bogey will take
All little girls that he finds awake.

The sister reddens, then softens her voice;
"Sleep, my darling, 'tis time for rest;
Sleep, and to-morrow I'll give you choice
Out of all my ribbons you love the best."
Down in its pillows the roguish head
Nestled, and softly the tiny said,
"I'm asleep, I'm asleep; so now, dear Lu,
Your black-eyed Bogey can come to you."

WEAKER THAN A WOMAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DORA THORNE," "THE COST OF HER LOVE," "FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT."

CHAPTER XXVII—[CONTINUED.]

"I shall have a toast to propose presently, gentleman," he said, "for which I shall want brimming glasses. Before giving it, however, I have a few words to say to you."

Silence deep and impressive fell over them; when the Earl spoke in the tone that he did he meant something. There was not the faintest sound when he began.

"Gentlemen, old friends, and neighbors I may say, there has been an injustice done amongst you which I have asked you here to-day to set straight. Understand me plainly, as an Englishman I uphold the legal institutions of my country. I bow my head to the decision of a judge; I listen with respect to the verdict of a jury. But, gentleman, human laws, just because they are human and not divine, must at times err; and I say they erred when they pronounced a man as honest, industrious, and honorable as my friend Darcy Lonsdale, capable of influencing a woman to leave him her money. Gentlemen, the judge who gave sentence against him was a stranger to him, and the jury who decided in favor of the heir-at-law did not know him. But you know him; he has lived amongst you all his life, he has served you to the best of his knowledge, and not one amongst you, man, woman, or child, can say that he has ever spoken a false word or done a mean or underhand deed. He has always been industrious, honest, and generous—one of those men who make the very backbone of Old England—a loyal subject, a spirited townsman, a true friend, a devoted husband, a kind father. He has spent his life amongst you, and none of you can say that you have ever known him to do wrong. If you can, speak."

There was a dead silence which lasted for some moments, and then a voice said:

"You are right, my lord. Not one amongst us has ever known him to do wrong."

"I am sure not," declared the Earl. "Now mind what I say. With the jury and the judge who thought James Hardman entitled to Elizabeth Hardman's money, and who really believed that Darcy Lonsdale had wrongfully used his great influence with her, I have nothing to do. They did their duty honestly, even if mistakenly. To you who constituted yourselves judge and jury—to you who, knowing the man and his character, judge him yourselves as guilty—to you I wish to speak. I believe him to be innocent. I have read carefully since my return every word of the trial; and I say before you all, in the most emphatic words that I can use, that I believe him to be innocent, and, what is more, to be a deeply injured man."

He was obliged to stop, for there rose from the lips of the men who had misjudged Darcy Lonsdale, who had shunned him, who had withdrawn their business from him, who had half broken his honest heart by their conduct, a cheer such as had never been heard in Lilford. Perhaps in their hearts they had never quite believed him guilty. Perhaps the Earl's noble words touched them with compunction and regret. Something appealed to them, and they cheered until the walls of the "Bramber Arms" shook again.

"We are agreed then, gentlemen," said the Earl. "Our old friend and fellow-townsman is an honest, honorable gentleman."

They cheered again and again. It was with some difficulty that the Earl could make himself heard. At last silence was restored, and then he continued:

"We can never make up to him for all that he has suffered; we cannot give him back the strength, the hope, the happiness he has lost; we cannot atone for the wretched hours, the sleepless nights and the weary days—all that is beyond us. But I have thought of a plan by which we may aid him, and I want the close attention of every gentleman present while I propose it."

The Earl paused for one moment, and those seated at his hospitable table looked earnestly at him; there was still deeper silence when he began to speak again.

"There is no secrecy in England. Everything done in the country is as open as the sea that surrounds it. Our newspapers ventilate everything, and in one sense that is quite right; but in a case like this it is hard. Throughout the length and breadth of England men have read how Darcy Lonsdale's case went against him, and how he lost the money left to him. I want something else to go through the length and breadth of the land; I want people to read how Darcy Lonsdale's friends and townsmen—myself at their head—met and expressed their sympathy with him, and that they presented him with a handsome testimonial to show their full confidence in him and to make up for his loss. That testimonial I propose to head myself with five hundred pounds; and I venture to say there will not be a nobleman or a gentleman in the county who will not add his name to the list."

Cheers again arose—never had the "Bramber Arms" heard such cheers. Darcy Lonsdale's face had grown deathly pale; but for the strong arm of his son thrown round him, he would have fallen.

"I have one word more to say, gentlemen," continued the Earl, "and it is this. My agent, Mr. John Sleaman, a gentleman whom you all know and respect, is leaving me. I am glad to say that a fortune has fallen to him, and that he is going to enjoy it. I propose now to ask Mr. Darcy Lonsdale to take his post. The emoluments are good—one thousand per annum and a house to live in. If he will accept the office, I shall be proud to place my interests, my welfare, in the hands of a worthy, honest, and honorable gentleman. Yet one word more. Mr. Lonsdale is no longer young; but he has a son—I wish we all had such a son—and I propose that he acts, if necessary, in his father's place, always of course with his authority; if he does, I shall secure two good agents instead of one. Gentlemen, join me in drinking the health of a valued, trusted townsman, of an honest, honorable man, my agent Darcy Lonsdale."

It was drunk with such honors as a man's name seldom receives. Then Darcy Lonsdale rose and turned his white face to them; but he could make no speech—the only words his trembling lips could utter were:

"Heaven bless you, my lord! I cannot thank you, though you have made a man of me again. My dear old friends and neighbors, how could you have misjudged me? But you see now that it was all a mistake. I am glad of it. In future we will deal gently with each other, we will judge each other mercifully. Lord Arlington, you have saved my honor; henceforward command me as you will." Then, unable to say any more, he sat down.

Doctor Hunter was the first to leave his place and shake hands with him.

"I never believed one word of the story, Mr. Lonsdale," he said, "although I confess that I have avoided you. Will you shake hands and let the past be past?"

After that the guests went up to the lawyer one by one and shook his hand. Some frankly avowed that they had misjudged him, some begged his pardon, some said they had gone with the many; but every man present wished him well and God-speed in his new life.

The speech worth hearing when that scene had passed, when justice had been done to an injured man, when peace had been made, was when Doctor Hunter stood up to propose Lord Arlington's health. Never was a toast so received; for there is nothing after all which touches a true man's heart sooner than defence of the weak, love of justice, and generosity.

It was the most successful evening ever known, and it did an immense deal of good; there was not a man present who did not learn a lesson from the Earl, who did not resolve in his heart to be more merciful, more pitiful, more charitable, who did not say to himself that he would be more careful in judging another time. And it was a strange thing that, when they came to compare notes, there was not a man amongst them who had really believed the lawyer guilty; they had gone only with what they thought was public opinion—one had removed his business from the office because another did, one had avoided Darcy Lonsdale because another did. But the Earl had taught them a lesson which went home to each heart.

It was such a pleasant evening, and Lord Arlington had so contrived matters that Darcy Lonsdale was the real hero and not himself. He was all that was most kind and considerate; he talked to him, and won his son's heart for ever. But in everything he put Darcy first, so that people might understand all this had been done for him. Was it any wonder when he was gone the men stood in little groups, each one praising him?

Felix followed him to the door of his carriage and said:

"My lord, your life is filled, so people say, with great and generous actions; but none could be so great, so generous, so noble, as that which you have done to-day."

"I have only done justice, my dear boy," said the Earl kindly. "Your father was an injured man; I have tried to set him straight. *Au reste*, I wanted a good agent, and I have found one."

"You cannot make light of the deed," returned Felix; "it is a good one. My father appears to be a new man to night; there is a light on his face and fire in his eyes that I have not seen for long months. The miracle has been worked by you—you have removed the false reproach attaching to his name. I can fancy, but I cannot tell you, what our home will be like to-night. My heart beats fast when I think of the mother and the children there, my lord. I am not very eloquent, and I am moved too much for words—I can only echo my father's request, command me as you you will."

The Earl was more touched than he liked to show, by the emotion on the handsome young face.

"I will make you this one promise, Mr. Felix Lonsdale," he said—"if ever I want a service done, or want a friend, I will come to you."

"Thank you, my lord," responded Felix; and when the Earl drove off home he knew that he had left some of the happiest hearts in England behind him.

No wonder that they praised and blessed him; he was a kind hearted man, who knew how to use his influence in a noble manner—one of those men who, to keep alive in the hearts of the people a love for their rulers, do more than many orators and statesmen put together.

What a night it was! The Vicar drove away soon after the Earl had left; and then one by one the company dwindled down to about twenty. These would not let Darcy Lonsdale leave them—they had so much to say to him, and were so anxious to make up to him for their coldness; and when the host grew anxious, they would not separate until they had sung "Auld Lang Syne" in chorus. Then they escorted father and son to Vale House, where Eve and Kate anxiously awaited them.

"I am quite sure," said Eve, springing from her seat, "that I hear them; and that is Mr. Lonsdale laughing—do you hear, Katie?—laughing—and he has never laughed since the trial! Now I know there is good news."

There was good news in very truth, and the pity was that Lord Arlington was not there to see Kate clasp her arms round her husband's neck and sob out that she always knew matters would come right—that he was so good Heaven was sure to make his innocence clear. Presently she looked at him with tremulous lips.

"Is it really true, Darcy, that you are to be the Earl's agent and have a thousand a year? I can hardly believe that it is all true."

"It is true, Kate," he replied. "Eve, my dear, what have you to say to me, my true friend—the one true friend who loved me well enough to offer me her fortune if I would take it? Eve, I shall never forget that."

It had been arranged that Eve should spend the night at Vale House, so they sat round the fire until they were quite ashamed of the hour, and Felix repeated every one of the Earl's noble words, while the two ladies listened in raptures; every time he paused they said, "Go on, Felix," until he assured them that he had repeated every word.

"So it will be printed in every paper in England?" said Kate. "Well, my only puzzle is, what could have inspired Lord Arlington to do such a kind and generous action?"

Felix knew that Lady Maude had been the chief instigator of it, but that was a secret he never told—he kept it all his life. It was Darcy Lonsdale who answered his wife's question.

"My dear Kate," he said, "Lord Arlington has a love of seeing justice done. I remember when he raised half the county because some wrong had been done to a toll-gate keeper. It was such men as he who made Old England what she is, and who made 'England' a synonym for honor."

And then these simple people, who had been through the fiery furnace of suffering, who had borne sorrow, shame, and disgrace, who had never ventured to hope for justice in this world, knelt and thanked Heaven for their rescue, and Darcy Lonsdale's eyes grew dim with grateful tears as he opened his Bible and read how the just and merciful Creator saves those who put their trust in Him.

Gradually they awoke to the full reality of the good fortune that had befallen them. The strength of his youth seemed to have returned to Darcy Lonsdale, he took his place once more amongst his townsmen, he went briskly to and fro from his office, he worked hard at his business, the clerks came back one by one to the office, and far more than its ancient glory returned to the house of Lonsdale and Son.

Kate could not rest until she had seen the Earl, in order to thank him; and the little lady went over to Bramber Towers and asked for an interview. She tried to thank him in a dignified matronly fashion, and ended by falling upon her knees and kissing his hand, very much to the Earl's confusion and delight. It was a new life for them all, and the warmth of it cheered and brightened them more than anything had ever done before.

The day came when Darcy Lonsdale put his arm lovingly on his son's shoulder and said:

"Do not think, Felix, that in the midst of my troubles and of my prosperity I have given no thought to you. I am doing the best I can for you by giving you so much work that you will have no time to regret your lost love."

"My dear father, I shall regret it until I die," returned Felix.

"The young always think both their love and their sorrow immortal. I will say now what I have never said before, because I thought it would pain you—I thought she was not worthy of such love as yours. She had nothing but a beautiful face to recommend her—her soul was not beautiful, her heart was not true. The time will come when you will say that you had a fortunate escape. I pray Heaven that it may be so."

But Felix looked grave; the world must come to an end before he could see a silver lining to that cloud—the cloud of his misplaced, unhappy love.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Lady Chevenix wrote a long letter home, telling her mother how greatly she was enjoying Paris—how she had been to one of the State balls at the Tuileries, and how the Emperor had danced with her—and Mrs. Have, on her side, made all the ladies round Lilford envious by telling them how her "dear child, Lady Chevenix," was enjoying herself in Paris, and what a favorite she was at the Imperial Court.

Sir Owen was very kind to Violet in those days, and she was so completely dazzled by the novelty of all she saw that she never remembered Felix, except to congratulate herself on her own good sense in having given him his *congé*. Some slight indications of impatience made her think that Sir Owen had a certain amount of bad temper, but at present he had shown none to her—indeed, she thought him far better than he had represented himself. He had told her that he gambled and drank. She had seen nothing of these bad habits: she was too inexperienced to detect that he had placed a restraint on himself that he might break down any day.

She did not like him very much. Although he was a Baronet and a man of wealth, he was not a thorough gentleman. That she must have known. Thorough gentlemen are men of honor—and the man who steals the promised wife of another man can hardly be placed under that category. She found that Sir Owen was coarse in his speech. She often, even in those early days, shrank from him, saying:

"You talk so strangely, Owen—I do not understand you."

"Then you must have some lessons, my charming wife," he would answer laughingly, following up the remark by speech that was anything but refined.

That was done in good humor; what he could be when that humor changed she had yet to find out. She did not love him—she never made the least pretence of loving him. She was kind to him; she tried to talk to him, to amuse him; she obeyed his wishes, and made herself very amiable and charming—not because she loved him, but because he was the means of procuring her all the luxury, the magnificence, the pleasure that she now enjoyed. In his coarse way he felt that.

He brought her home one day a set of sapphires so brilliant and rare that she cried out with rapture when she saw them.

"There are no sapphires finer than these," he remarked. "What do you say for them, Violet?"

"I say 'Thank you' with all my heart," she cried.

"Is that all, Violet?"

"What more can I say, except that you are good, kind, and generous?"

"Can you think of nothing else, Violet?" he asked. She looked puzzled.

"I cannot indeed, Owen; but I will say anything you wish me to say."

He turned away impatiently.

"If you thought any set form of words, any pretty phrase would please me, you would use it—I am quite sure of that."

With the brilliant sapphires in one of her hands, she looked half wistfully at him; the man who had it in his power to make such presents as this was worth any amount of patience.

"I would say anything to please you, Owen," she said.

He looked into her fair face.

"I know you would," he returned; "but it has never occurred to you to throw your arms round my neck and kiss me, and—and say, 'Thank you, my darling.'"

She shrank from him with a little shudder, his dark face was so close to hers.

"I have noticed," he said, "that you are always ready to thank me when I bring you any of the silly trifles women like so much—you are then most amiable; but never once, by Heaven, since we have been married have you come to me and kissed me of your own free will."

"I will do so now," she said; and she placed the sapphires in their case.

"No, thank you," he returned. "It would not be spontaneous. You would do it because I asked you."

She was startled at the expression of his face, at the tone of his voice—startled, and just a little afraid.

"You do love me, Violet, do you not?" he asked.

She had never thought about loving him; he was to her a rich man who had wanted her to marry him, who had bribed her by his wishes and his title, and for whom she had given up the man she really loved; but to love him—she had never thought of it; it had never entered into her calculations. He was to have her beauty, she was to have his money and his title.

"Do you love me, Violet?" he demanded angrily; and before she had time to speak a sudden conviction darted through her mind that she did not love him and never should—a certain terrible conviction that, although she was married to this man, she loved Felix Lonsdale still.

She trembled as she answered:

"Yes, you know I love you, Owen."

She knew the words were false, but she was too frightened to say anything else.

"I know you ought to love me," he said savagely; "but there is no understanding a woman—fair dealing is not characteristic of the sex. Still I should not like to think that you married me for my money, and for nothing else. Did you, Violet?"

She was not clever at lying, although she had broken a noble heart by her weakness. She had not the quick ready fashion of speaking falsely which she acquired afterwards. She buried her face in her hands; it was easier to weep, after the weak fashion of women, than to speak.

"Nay, I did not mean to pain you, Violet," he said. "Do not cry. Still I should like to know that you love me. No man would like to think that his wife had married him for his money."

After that little scene Lady Chevenix did not feel quite so sure of her husband, and began to stand a little in awe of him.

* * * * *

The gay French capital might be as gay as it would, Sir Owen would not remain. Invitations poured in upon him and his beautiful young wife—he would not accept them. One of his fixed resolves was to be in England at Christmas, and to England he was determined to go. In vain Violet pleaded that Garnwood at Christmas would be dull. He laughed at the notion.

"No place is ever dull where I am, Violet," he cried. "That shows how little you know me. I shall fill the place with visitors of my own choosing—and I promise you that we shall not spend our time in singing psalms."

That was the first dissension between Violet and her husband. She would fain have remained longer, but Sir Owen was tired of Paris. He liked English sports, English habits, and English cheer. He was angry that Violet should for one moment presume to like Paris. It was unheard of, he said, that any Englishwoman should find Christmas at home dull. And that was the first time that Violet saw him in a rage. He swore loudly—not at her—that was to come later on. He declared the whole race of women foolish and idiotic. He frightened her so that she was glad to escape from his presence and give orders for the packing up.

"I am not my own mistress, after all," she said, with a discontented look on her fair face—"I cannot do as I like. I never dreamed that I should have a master."

She did not like the idea. She had been so free and unfettered all her life that it was new to her to be under control. She had yet to learn that Sir Owen had the obstinacy of twenty men, and that when he had once set his mind upon anything he would carry it through. Her wishes, caprices, fancies, and desires would have about as much effect upon him as summer waves have upon a weather-beaten rock.

She had a sample of this when they reached Calais on their return to England. It was not wet weather, but there had been a terrible gale, and the sea was rough. Violet was a bad sailor, and when she heard the turf beating on the shore she begged of her husband to delay their passage at least twenty-four hours. She was so afraid, she said, of a rough sea.

He laughed. It was all nonsense—the sea would not hurt her. No one ever heard of an accident to the Dover and Calais boats.

She allowed that; but the passage made her very ill. Would he not wait?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE REVIEWER

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

"Castle Blair," a charming story descriptive of some children and their life and home in Ireland, is one of the best Irish stories published, and has received the encomiums of John Ruskin, the famous art critic, who speaks of it as a "lovely little book about children." It is written in a simple, unaffected style, and the characters are so true to life they instantly attract and hold the interest and sympathy of the reader from beginning to end. Published by Roberts & Co., of Boston, and for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, of this city.

Appleton & Co., of New York, have just issued a handy little volume entitled "Local Etiquette of New York," which gives a concise and clear statement of the best forms in use in good society. It cannot but be an acceptable guide to any one in doubt of any of the subjects discussed, which include all the various ceremonies incident to social life—introductions, visiting, salutations, debuts in society, matinees, "kettledrums," parties, and balls, opera and theatre, parties, musicals and weddings, and various anniversaries, for all of which it describes the rules as practised by the best society. For sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, of this city.

"The Beaconsfield Cartoons," taken from the London Punch, and published in a pamphlet form by Estes & Lauriat, of Boston, contains one hundred and eight caricatures by Leech, Doyle, and Tenniel, illustrating the whole political career of Disraeli, from his entrance into Parliament to the present time—1843-1878. They are undoubtedly fine specimens of political caricature, and fully exemplify the keenly graphic style of the artists, which has found a wide field in the prominence of the subject and his connection with various political movements, and reveal much that biography would conceal.

The admirers of Indian biography will be pleased with a volume just published by Dodd, Mead & Co., of New York, entitled "Red Eagle and the Wars with the Creek Indians of Alabama," by George Cary Eggleston, whose style is extremely felicitous in the field of writing. The real story of Red Eagle is full of dramatic incident and dash, and under the graphic delineation and vivid powers of description possessed by the author, it is invested with all the romance and vigorous action that belongs to a sensation story, and yet maintains historical accuracy throughout. While it will find special favor among a boyish class of readers, it is interesting to all. For sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger.

Appleton & Co., have added to their "Collection of Foreign Authors" "The Diary of a Woman," from the French of Octave Feuillet. It is written with that skilful management of plot and highly polished style of expression which characterizes the higher class of French romance. For sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger.

The currency question is discussed in all its varied subjects in a little pamphlet entitled "Paper Money," a collection of the principal historical facts bearing upon the current financial discussion, by H. W. Richardson, and published by Appleton & Co., of New York. For sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, of this city.

"Little Stay at Home and Her Friends" is the title of a lovely holiday book for little children, written and illustrated by Miss L. Clarkson. As a gift book for children it cannot be excelled. The cover has an attractive illustration in gold, and is very attractively gotten up by the publishers, F. W. Robinson & Co., of this city.

MAGAZINES.

The December number of the "Magazine of Art" has a very spirited frontispiece from a picture by W. F. Yeames, on a subject incident to the days of the Royalists. The opening chapters of "Our Living Artists," give an interesting sketch of Philip Hermogenes Calderon, R. A., with his portrait and excellent cuts of two of his pictures. "An American's Talk About Art," is very comprehensive; a discussion of "Horses in Relation to Art" is accompanied by a picture of the "The Old Cover Hack" by Landseer, which is full of his graphic delineation of animal life; the chapters on "Artists Haunts" leads one pleasantly among the lochs of Scotland; the "Universities Galleries at Oxford," with studies by Michael Angelo and Raphael; an article on "Etching in England," and an illustrated description of the Paris Exhibition complete the list of contents. Published by Cassell, Potter & Galpin, of London and New York.

The January number of "Scribner's Magazine" has a great variety of attractions in its pages, and is illustrated with a number of graphic and artistic pictures. The contents open with a Christmas ballad "Storm the Bold;" "Old Maryland Manners" are charmingly portrayed by Frank B. Meyer, with characteristic illustrations; a quaint picture of olden time is given in the "Century Plants," by Isabella J. Hopkins; the poem "Episcedium," by Bayard Taylor, will be read with interest, it being in memory of William Cullen Bryant; the chapters of "Haworth and Falconberg," lead one on with additional interest in these serials; Clarence Cook contributes an interesting article on "Leonardi Da Vinci;" the Tile Club have a graphically illustrated account of the "Tile Club at Work." The other contents are "Coltere Hazing" by Charles F. Tiwing; "The Mountain Lakes of California," "At the Old Bull's Head," by C. C. Buel; "The Amendment of the Patent Law," by J. H. Raymond; an "Epitaph and Interpretation Poems," by Richard Realf; "A Sonnet to Modjeska," by R. W. Gilder; "Minon," by Annie Porter, and "These Three," by Amanda T. Jones; the "Topics of the Times," "Home and Society," "Culture and Progress," and "Bric-a-Brac," are of their usual interesting character.

"Appleton's Journal" for January is the first number of the new form of contents they have adopted for the future, in which illustrations are excluded, and the pages are devoted to the highest order of literature. Its contents indicate well for the eclectic character of the future issues, and are as follows: "The Romance of a Painter," are the opening chapters of a continued story from the French of Ferdinand Fabre; "The Eighteenth Century," by T. C. Kebbel; "Chrysanthemums Gathered from the Greek Anthology," by W. M. Hardinge; "An Art Budget," by R. S. F. Tyrwhitt; "Elephant Catching," "The Dietetic Use of Wines," by George L. Austin, M. D.; "Petrarch," "A Man May Not Marry His Grandmother," by Horace E. Scudder. Editor's Table contains some interesting miscellany in brief.

The Supplement to the December "Popular Science Monthly" contains the following notable articles: "The Recent Development of Socialism in Germany and the United States," by Prof. Henry Fawcett; "The Migration of Animals," by Dr. Andrew Wilson; "Civilization and Noise," by James Sully; "Nation Making," by Prof. Grant Allen; "The Sun in His Glory," by Richard Proctor; "The Contrast of Temperance with Abstinence, the Action of Alcohol, the Moderate Use of Alcohol True Temperance;" "The Fear of Death," by C. E. S., "The Organization of Unremunerative Industry," by Edith Simcox; "The Genesis of Matter," "The Art and Practice of Teaching," "Malt Liquors, their Influence on Digestion and Nutrition," "Some Queer Industries," "American Facts and Gladstone Fallacies," "The Afghans," and "Hunting Among the Kirghis."

The "Wide Awake," January number, begins a new volume, with a list of charming attractions for little folks. The frontispiece, with poem by Margaret J. Preston, is entitled "The Christ Cradle;" "My Mother Put It On," is a lifelike story by Mrs. A. D. S. Whitney; "Boston Rosebuds," are described and illustrated by Miss Humphrey, who also contributes a graphic picture of a "Christmas Tragedy." "Lady Betty's Cooking School," is described very interestingly by Mrs. Lillie; The series of articles on the "Poets' Homes," gives one on Ralph Waldo Emerson, by G. H. Bartlett, including a portrait. The magazine also contains a great deal more of highly interesting matter. Published by D. Lathrop & Co., of Boston.

The contents of "Lippincott's Magazine" for January are of the most entertaining variety. The opening chapters take the reader through the "Yorkshire Byways," by Alfred S. Gibbs. "The Island of Capri," is pleasantly described by Dwight Benton in an article called "The Artist's Island." "Women's Husbands" gives the first two chapters of a continued story. "Wild Boars and Bear Hunting," by Dr. G. Archie Stockwell. "Flitters, Tatters, and the Counsellor," by May Laffan. "A Young Girl's Experience During the Siege of Paris," by A. L. W. "Through Winding Ways" is continued through several chapters. "A Western Town" by Edward C. Bruce. "The Story of a Proverb," by Sidney Lanier. "Notes of a Trip to Newfoundland," by D. C. Macdonald; "Madame Dubarry," by Lucy H. Hooper. The poems are "The Poet's Protest," by Alfred H. Louis, "The Cyprian Oracle," by P. H. Hayne; "Christus," by Julia C. Dorr. The Monthly Gossip has its usual variety of topics. The illustrations are very fine.

In a volume of poetry, with illustrations, entitled "Rag Fair and Other Reveries," Miss L. Clarkson has contributed an exquisite gem to the list of holiday books. The poem which gives its name to the book is based on an imaginary Rag Fair of spiritual garments, which has been portrayed by the author with the most skilful ingenuity, and shows great depth of thought and feeling. There is a vein of the most refined and picturesque fancy pervading the book which indicates great delicacy of taste and appreciation of the beautiful and good in poetic art. The illustrations, by the author, are very artistic, and reflect very creditably on her skill as an artist. The volume is gotten up very handsomely, printed in large type on tinted paper. As a charming holiday book it shows taste on the part of the publishers, F. W. Robinson & Co.

The January issue of Harper's Magazine contains a choice variety of prose and verse, with many notable illustrations. The contents are "England's Great Sea Port," "A Chapter in the History of Ants," "A Reporter's Romance," "Rambles in the South of France," "Cloisonne Enamel," "The Meeting of the Royal on Durdham Down," Rousseau, with portrait, "The Necklace," (a poem) "Ye Rag, (a poem). "Home." "Maria del Occidente." The conclusion of "Macleod of Dare." "The Image of San Donato." The conclusion of "The Return of the Native." "The Great Harvest Year," (a poem.) The Editor's Department is full of interesting topics.

St. Nicholas for January, which begins the new volume, brings a budget of good things for the little ones, even more choice and attractive than ever in its shorter stories and pictures. It's frontispiece is a lovely picture group of "The Sisters," from a painting by William Black, while its opening pages are made doubly attractive with a poem by Whittier, entitled "The Voyage of the Jettie," with illustrations. Among the articles are "Children's Day at St. Paul's," "What Shall He Do With Her?" by Charles Dudley Warner. The conclusion of "Half a Dozen Housekeepers," "Some Malayan Dances," by Fanny Roper Feudge," Mrs. Burnett's story, entitled "Behind the White Brick," "Why Will Elspect's Ship went into the Church," by Sarah Pritchard. "What the Birds Said," a poem by Margaret Vandegrift. "A Song," from the unpublished writings of Theodore Winthrop, and many others. The music page gives simple pretty Nocturnes for little hands. A pretty story for very little ones is told about the little girl who wanted to go to the moon.

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SATURDAY EVENING, DEC. 21, 1878.

CHRISTMAS.

Once more the merry Christmas-tide rolls in upon the shore of time and in its sounds, again we hear the notes of praise and song which tell of the peace and good will given unto all so many years ago, while borne upon the waves Pleasure comes richly freighted with all the "good cheer" she brings for the many merry-makings of the Christmas season. From the highest to the lowest, the sacred charm still works its magic spell, and sheds a happy influence in the hearts of young and old. But even when there comes to age or sorrow no "merry" part of Christmas, memory can always trace the threads which have interwoven some pleasant Christmas times with their life, and brings them back, each time that Christmas comes, and we see the Christmas of our childhood then, like some fair vision in a magic glass, in which memory and love have recalled old scenes and vanished forms, and for a moment all the charms of our early days come back. Again we are young, again we are surrounded by all who were our companions in youth, again we hear the echoing sounds of merry-making mingled with laughter and song, until we almost forget that the "rapid strides of time" have left such scenes far behind, and have brought us near the end of another year in which to record the loss and gain of life. Among the many gains, how many losses come which can never be replaced in one's life! Friends who one year ago were side by side have drifted far apart; the blossoms which we nursed so carefully have turned to thistles and thorns, and those on whom Fortune has smiled her sweetest, and placed success almost within their grasp, now receive her frowns and are plunged in dark despair; while the vacant places found everywhere, tell of a broken link in the chain of some one's life and of some kind heart which made every one glad a Christmas before, and now has ceased to beat. But in the midst of all these sad losses, we can still turn to the crowd of new lives growing up around us, and in their joy and happiness at Christmas time we can find our own. One cannot but yield to the influence of the hour which is so suggestive of festival and feasting, for it is said that

"So hallowed and gracious is the time
Wherein our Savior's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning sings all night long,
And then they say no evil spirit stirs abroad.
The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,"

The coming of Santa Claus is heard whispered around everywhere, and it seems to fill the air with its joyful sounds, which penetrate even the most barren and cheerless places. The pleasant exchanging of gifts, the Christmas tree fragrant with spicy odors and brilliant in its twinkling lights and lovely dress of gifts, all help to make Christmas a season, the merriest of all, and one to which we should lend our hearts with that generous spirit that partakes of the "peace and good will" which comes with Christmas day, and tells us to seek some poor unfortunate to whose life one can bring the light of brighter days, and bury our cares and sorrows in Christmas greens and greetings. We extend our greetings to all our readers with the best wishes of the season, and trust it will bring to them, all the happiness which can be associated with a "Merry Christmas."

WE are pleased to see that many of our subscribers have already kindly followed our suggestion as to getting a friend or two to subscribe with them in sending their own subscription, and we only hope that others will do likewise. We are anxious to double the circulation of THE POST, and a very little effort on the part of our friends would contribute much towards this result. Besides this, however, they will gain the advantage of securing their own paper at a reduced rate, as well as their friends', thus compensating themselves for their trouble.

SANCTUM CHAT.

THE ornamental glass ware tinted with the brilliant colors of the rainbow, and having the name of opalescent glass, is one of the recent achievements of science that delights the eye, and supplies a charming addition to the ornaments of home. To produce the colors, the glass while in a heated state, is subjected to the vapor of chloride of tin. Shades of more or less density are imparted by adding to the tin chloride a little nitrate of strontium or barium. The beautifying effect on some of the minor articles of glass ware is especially visible in inexpensive bouquet holders and paper weights, which although of very simple design are very attractive with these opalescent tints.

THE unsightly little excrescences or warts which sometimes appear on the hands have always called for man's ingenuity to provide some remedy to banish them, but a physician has lately discovered that they can be so beautifully utilized that it elevates them above the opprobrium of being only a disfigurement to the skin. It has been found that warts can be used with better results for skin grafting purposes than small pieces of skin, for they can be easily separated uninjured into numerous cylindrical rods which contain all the essential elements for the growth of skin, and when planted on a healthy tissue adapt themselves very readily to the soil, and quickly grow as starting points for a new skin.

HARD times do not seem to check the spread of luxury abroad. The last and greatest fashion in Paris and London is to trim napkins for tea and luncheon with point de Venise or guipure lace. The napkins for the dinner table are ornamented with a border especially designed to match the china. Knife handles are also made of china to match the dinner-set. The greatest luxury prevails in the little salad and vegetable plates. Crystal, Venetian, and Bohemian glass are no longer considered good enough. Chiselled or gilt silver inlaid with gems is the proper material. Mme. de Sagan, one of the most intimate friends of the Prince of Wales, is reputed to have the finest set of these plates in existence.

IT has been determined that a great many mysterious cases of illness, especially among physically weak people, are due to poison in articles of common use, the poisonous matter being diffused in the atmosphere. Dress fabrics, wall paper, and certain colorings of paint have been frequently cited as often containing these poisonous elements, but the latest subject of attack is baking powders, many of which are said to contain substances deleterious to health. Alum is especially marked as forming one of its prominent ingredients, and has a powerful and injurious effect on the membranes of the human system. On the other hand, a chemist argues that by the chemical change which takes place in the use of baking powders the alum is converted into a harmless condition, and while its presence in baking powders or bread is admitted, it does not follow that it is always injurious to health.

THE subject of cremation has been quite prominently discussed at Munich, Bavaria, where the authorities consulted the opinions of various religious denominations, but with rather conflicting results. The Catholics will have nothing to do with cremation, the Israelites refused to express an opinion, and the Protestants considered it would necessitate a change in the liturgy, so the Board of Health could only recommend it as appropriate under the following contingencies: After battles, during epidemics, for the conveyance of remains to a distant locality, and when the soil is unsuitable for burial purposes. While the burning of one body in epidemics might purify the atmosphere, the cremation of a number would probably tend to increase the infection; but there are so many localities where the soil is unfitted for burial purposes, the practice of cremation may in this case, as well as that of transportation, recommend itself as a necessity and become a practice.

THE Kanakas or Sandwich Islanders are surprisingly advanced in their cultivation and civilization notwithstanding their isolated position, for it is stated that only seven persons out of a thousand are unable to read. The educated classes are not only subscribers to many foreign periodicals and newspapers, among which is to be found THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, but they are thoroughly well informed on the prominent topics of the day abroad as well as at home. If a man presents himself at the polls, and there is any doubt of his possessing the necessary education to enable him to form an intelligent judgment, he is required to read the constitution, and if he does not do so fluently, he is told to go and study longer before he will be entitled to the right of suffrage. The English language is becoming quite generally spoken. The people are very musical, and their refinement and cultivation are quite above the ordinary standard, and Nature has made them rich in the abundance of her gifts.

THE liver is traditionally regarded as the seat of many of the aches and ails the flesh is heir to, but the Chinese curiously regard it as the residence of the human soul, and where all plans and projects are devised and thought out. The brain is considered of no account intellectually, and by their general belief in astrology the almanac is always consulted in illness to discover the auspicious days on which to send for the doctor. Their list of remedies present some curious contrasts to those familiar by use with us. Of syrups a kettle full is taken at once, and a single dose of pills number 80 or 100. The larvæ of beetles and other insects are used to strengthen feeble children; dried toads are used to give tone to the system, caterpillar syrup is a specific for bronchitis, and for small-pox, the skins of snakes and scorpions are dried and powdered and considered efficient remedies. These facts certainly excite one's astonishment when existing contemporary with the advancement of medical science to be found elsewhere and among nations who have constant intercourse with the Chinese.

WHILE there is an inherent prejudice in the minds of many people against the follies of lotteries, their antiquity shows that the folly is not a recent institution. For even among the Romans, it was a practice to enliven their Saturnalia feasts by distributing tickets, all of which gained some prize. Augustus instituted lotteries, and Nero established a lottery which distributed a thousand tickets daily, while a lottery, which affected our Colonial existence was granted in the year 1613 by King James, to promote the planting of English colonies in Virginia. Even the present time supplies many instances of faith in the lucky turn of Fortune's wheel. It is one of the most popular institutions of Italy, and a mammoth lottery scheme has been prominent among the closing events of the French Exposition. It needs however no moralizing philosopher to illustrate the fatal blanks which inevitably come to those who sue for Fortune's smiles in this channel, for in no other does she bestow her favors with such fickle uncertainty.

THERE is a superstition, which originated, it is said, in Poland, with regard to the choice of gems for wearing. It is that the month of the nativity of every individual has a mysterious connection with some one of the known precious stones. Hence the propriety, in the selection of presents, or for wear, of the adoption of those jewels belonging to the month which fate is imagined to have made significant. To illustrate this, one born in the month of January should wear garnet or jacinth—those stones being understood to belong in their fated character to that month. Subjoined is the list for the year. January—Jacinth or garnet. Constancy in every engagement. February—Amethyst. Peace of mind. March—Blood stone. Courage and success in dangers. April—Sapphire and diamond. Repentance and innocence. May—Emerald. Success in love. June—Agate. Long life and health. July—Cornelian or ruby. Forgetfulness. August—Sardonyx. Conjugal felicity. September—Chrysolite. Preserves from folly. October—Aquamarine or opal. Misfortune and hope. November—Topaz. Fidelity and friendship. December—Turquoise or malachite. Success and happiness in life. According to the proverb, "He who possesses a turquoise will always be sure of friends."

MATRIMONY frequently illustrates some strange exceptions to the rules which are supposed to exercise an influence over ones taste and opinion in the selection of husband and wife. While a woman may possess all those brilliant accomplishments which are thought to increase her charms as well as chances of matrimonial success, she will gain all the homage of admiration, but it is the plain unadorned woman who will win the heart. How often men of brilliant minds and genius select for a wife a woman of very ordinary mental cultivation and intelligence, and the same incongruity of taste is observed in women whose choice will be a man quite below her own characteristics of refinement and culture; and the world cannot but wonder at the binding of such strange incongruities of nature in the closely-linked chains of matrimony. A man recently speaking of an admired lady says, "she certainly is very highly cultivated. She is very stylish, plays well, sings well, talks well, dances well and rides well, and succeeds admirably in private theatricals. In fact, she's just the kind of a girl you'd like one of your friends to marry." "Then you wouldn't care to marry her?" suggests another, "By no means. What I'm looking for is a real nice girl." Marriage after all then, is not governed by any relative rules, but by some strange inscrutable and indefinable influence which neither philosophy nor example can explain.

VERY few people walk enough in winter to realize its sanitary advantages, especially to persons of sedentary habits. It is one of the most health-giving tonics for every person who is able to walk, and as a beautifier of the face and physique, it is unequalled. Perseverance and energy are only requisite to bring its beneficial results to the appreciation of every one. That its health-giving effects are beginning to be more realized is illustrated in the "Walking Clubs" which have been recently organized in some of our large cities, among the leading young ladies in fashionable society. The element of luxurious idleness and ease, has now discovered the benefits derived from walking. They make pedestrian excursions once a week, through some pleasant rural district, by which they combine the charms of scenery with exercise in the clear bracing atmosphere of the country. The seven or ten mile walk is not half as fatiguing as half the distance walked through some shopping expedition. People should remember that it is as necessary to develope vigorous, healthy bodies as it is to cultivate the mind; for what is mental power without bodily strength.

IT is the unguarded word which oftenest proves a root of bitterness in married life—the want of proper discipline of speech which thrusts thorns and needles into family happiness. Young married people cannot be too careful in the exercise of a wholesome restraint over their tongues and intercourse with each other if they would preserve mutual respect, and lay a basis for domestic tranquility.

HERALDS AND COATS-OF-ARMS.

To Americans the subject of heraldry, associated as it is with foreign nobility and aristocracy, is merely curious, although of late years it has not been uncommon for a certain class of people in this country to attempt the introduction of some of its usages. Therefore some few facts concerning the matter may not prove uninteresting.

One of the old institutions that still survive in London is the Heralds College, or College of Arms. It was founded by Richard the Third, and privileges were granted to it by successive sovereigns. The Dukes of Norfolk have for two centuries been hereditary presidents of the college. Before that time the office of earl-marshal was bestowed upon any knightly or noble person at the sovereign's will and pleasure; but Charles the Second, in 1672, granted it in perpetuity to the Howards, of Norfolk. It has ever since been a custom of the Crown to sanction all nominations of the officials of the College—kings-of-arms, heralds, pursuivants, etc.,—made by the Duke of Norfolk for the time being, as earl-marshal and president of the College of Arms.

The young Duke of Norfolk, the present hereditary earl-marshal of England, has certainly no very laborious duties to fulfill in that capacity. He issues, as chief of the Heralds College or College of Arms, all royal proclamations, and arranges the solemnities of coronations, royal marriages, christenings, and such like ceremonies. The College comprises, besides the earl-marshal as president, three kings of arms or at arms, six heralds-at-arms, and four pursuivants-at-arms. The authorities themselves seem to be discordant in their use of the little words "at" and "in."

But before describing the work which these loftily-designated personages are engaged in, it may be well to say a few words concerning what is known of the origin of the system or science of heraldry.

Some enthusiastic votaries carry their admiration so far as to give the ancient biblical personages coats-of-arms, tracing the custom up to Noah and even to Adam. One extravagance generally provokes another in an opposite direction; in this case the antagonistic view takes the form of a definition that heraldry "is the science of fools with long memories."

Its origin is not clearly known, but a leading writer on the subject says: First, that heraldry appears as a science at the commencement of the thirteenth century. Secondly, that although armorial bearings had then been in existence undoubtedly for some time, no precise date has yet been discovered for their first assumption. Thirdly, that in this assumption the object of the assumers was, not, as it has been generally asserted and believed, to record any achievement or to symbolise any virtues or qualifications, but simply to distinguish their persons and properties; to display their pretensions to honors or estates; to attest their alliances; or to acknowledge their feudal tenures. Fourthly, that wherever it has been possible to sift the evidence thoroughly, it has appeared that the origin of certain singular coats-of-arms has been the invention of a later period—stories fabricated to account for the bearings and sometimes flatter the descendants of the family, by attributing to their ancestors the most improbable adventures or achievements.

As an historical fact he also comes to the conclusion that heraldry had not established itself in the times of the first and second Crusades, or, at least, did not originate with those stirring movements, because it is not mentioned by any of the chroniclers of those days. The third Crusade, during which it was undoubtedly known, commenced in the latter part of the twelfth century.

But let us on to our Heralds College, the meetings of which are called chapters.

The kings-at-arms are majestic persons. Garter king-at-arms grants armorial bearings, devices, and supporters; conveys the insignia of the Order of the Garter to any foreign potentate who is made a knight thereof; and in solemn ceremonies marshals distinguished persons to their places.

Next to Garter king-at-arms rank the Norroy and Clarencieux kings. The former word means, or once meant, north king—"nor roi" representing the sovereign of England, for ceremonial purposes, in the regions of the kingdom north of the Trent. There is supposed to have been a corresponding official—Surroy, or south king—for the regions south of the Trent; but if so, this name became changed to Clarencieux by Edward the Third, who founded the Order of the Garter, and gave this particular office to his son Lionel, Duke of Clarence. Clarencieux is the chief official connected with matters relating to the heraldic formalities of the nobility and the Knights of the Bath. He surveys and registers the arms, descent and marriages of all persons belonging to the rank of noble, south of the Trent.

Another grade is that of pursuivants, or poursuivants, originally meaning followers. Any great noble might, in the feudal times, institute his own pursuivant by his own authority. And very fanciful names they received, such as Blanch Lyon (White Lion), Esperance (Hope), Eagle Vert (Green Eagle), and Blanch Sanglier (White Boar). The four pursuivants of the College of Arms are known as Rouge Croix (Red Cross), Blue Mantle, Rouge Dragon (Red Dragon), and Portcullis, from circumstances connected with the first institution of each.

The office appears to have been first established as a noviciate, or state of probation, through which higher offices were to be obtained.

Midway in rank between the kings-at-arms and the pursuivants are the six heralds, higher in dignity than the latter, lower than the former. They are known by provincial designations—the Somerset, York, Chester, Richmond, Windsor, and Lancaster heralds—and attend in rotation at the College to carry on the routine business, with the pursuivants as their probationary assistants.

Greatly indeed have the duties of all these officials lessened in the course of centuries. Beside other imposing functions, the kings-at-arms, heralds, and pursuivants, some or other of them, carried messages of courtesy or defiance between royal or knightly personages, superintended and registered trials by battle and all chivalric exercises, computed the slain after battle, and recorded the valiant deeds of the fallen or surviving combatants. Alas! How prosaic have they now become! The modern College of Arms, considered as a definite body of officials, is mainly employed in assisting those who desire to trace their descent from the owners of titles or hereditary privileges. The members are consulted as professional men in such enquiries. They empower persons to adopt armorial bearings which have been disused for one or more generations, on proof and registration of pedigree. They may grant wholly new armorial bearings to persons who have no hereditary claim to such, on the production of proof that they are in a condition to sustain the rank of gentlemen. The members of the chapter receive salaries, but derive their principal income from fees charged for assistance in tracing pedigrees and titles, and for the granting and registration of arms.

As stated above, their evidence in support of pedigrees is received in courts of justice, provided it be traceable to the original books, which were prepared when solemn and regular circuits were periodically made throughout the kingdom.

It knocks much of the chivalry and grace out of the subject to pore over the dismal technicalities on which these functionaries discourse. How many of us can tell the difference between shield, crest, torces or wreaths, coronets, helmets, mantles, supporters, hatchments, quarters? The attitudes in which lions and unicorns, stags and bears, and other quadrupedal as well as bipedal animals are represented in armorial bearings, have given rise to a number of adjectives decidedly Norman French in their character, such as couchant (lying), rampant (leaping), issuant (coming out), gardant (looking forward), regardant (looking back), combatant (fighting), passant (passing), sejant (sitting), etc.

The furs have peculiar names in heraldry, and so have the various colors. In engraving, instead of describing a coat-of-arms, difference of color, metal, and fur are denoted by vertical, horizontal, diagonal, and other lines, or by spots, chequers, zig zags and other marks.

Suppose we give ourselves a lesson, and try to understand the heralds' description of the armorial bearings of (say) the Grosvenors, Dukes of Westminster. Listen: "Quarterly, 1st and 4th az. a portcullis with chains pendent or, on a chief of the last in pale, the arms of King Edward the Confessor, betw. two united roses of York and Lancaster, being the arms of the city of Westminster, granted to the duke's ancestors as a coat of augmentation; 2nd and 3rd az. a garb, or, the family arms of the Grosvenors. Crest: a talbot statant, or, supporters—on each side a talbot ramp. reguard, or, gorged with a plain collar az."

In simple language this means a shield divided into four-quarters, the first and fourth sections painted blue, and containing the picture of a portcullis with gold chains hanging from it. The chief in pale holding the arms of King Edward, refers to the middle section of the shield, from left to right, and occupying one-fourth of its space, painted in gold. The second and third quarters, colored blue, inclose a sheaf of grain, in gold. The crest which surmounts the shield shows a dog, in gold, raised on his hind feet. The supporters which stand on each side of the shield are dogs, on their hind feet, in gold, looking backward, and wearing plain collars painted blue.

Big books and costly are those which have been published concerning this favorite subject. One, more than thirty years old, bears the title of "Heraldic Illustrations; Comprising the Armorial Bearings of the Principal Families of the Empire;" it has a hundred and fifty plate engravings, each containing five or six coats-of-arms; while interleaved pages of text give the pedigrees of the families.

Another quite recently published, is "The General Armory of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales; a Register of Armorial Bearings, from the Earliest to the Present Times," a prodigious work, comprising no fewer than sixty thousand coats-of-arm, described though not depicted.

The Dangers of Chemistry.

A most unfortunate accident which has occurred at Prague recalls, in many of its details and circumstances, the quaint traditions that were often prevalent in regard to the mediæval alchemists. Professor Fischer, of the gymnasium there, a young man only twenty-five years of age and of the highest eminence in his profession—that of chemistry—has come to an untimely end under the most melancholy circumstances. No one needs to be told that cyanide of potassium, a drug largely used in photography, is a poison of the most deadly character. Its active ingredient is prussic acid. In its pure, or, as chemists would term it, "anhydrous" form, is a substance too dangerous to be kept or even manufactured. If a glass capsule containing a wineglassful of pure prussic acid were broken in the pit of a theatre, those among the audience who were nearest the doors might escape, but the great majority would be killed on the spot. The prussic acid ordinarily sold and occasionally used for killing cats and dogs contains about a drop of the pure acid to a quarter of a pint of water. Pure prussic acid no chemist dare keep. He might as well compress a ton of dynamite into a single cartridge, supposing such package possible, and then leaving the deadly parcel lying loose on the table.

Cyanide of potassium is not, like prussic acid, volatile. It is a white powder, resembling flour or chalk. It is, however, so poisonous that a mere pinch of it, sprinkled over an open wound or sore, will cause almost instantaneous death; that a fragment almost imperceptible to the eye will, if swallowed, prove equally fatal; and that its mere smell has before now produced immediate death. It was, it seems, the ambition of Professor Fischer to discover some means of rendering cyanide of potassium harmless. We can do this with gun-powder—although the analogy is not strictly exact—the means employed with gunpowder being mechanical, while those for which he sought were chemical. We know what happens if a light is applied to a keg of gunpowder. If, however, we mix the powder with four or five times its bulk of sawdust, a torch may be applied to it with impunity. The mechanical resistance of the sawdust makes it impossible for the explosion to at once spread to the whole mass, and the consequence is that a sort of splutter ensues, like that of a squib or blue light. The Professor's idea was that if cyanide of potassium were thoroughly mixed with sal ammoniac, it would be as harmless as gunpowder mixed with sawdust, but would still remain equally available for all those purposes of photography for which it is at present absolutely indispensable.

In the course of his researches he made a mixture of which in his own mind he felt assured that it would meet the conditions of his problem. He compounded the cyanide with some other substance, and then, turning to his laboratory assistant, said:

"Science has now so far advanced as to be even able to render harmless so dangerous an agent as cyanide of potassium."

With these words he tasted the mixture, and was almost in an instant seized with the most violent and excruciating agonies. He at once implored his assistant to send for medical aid. Cyanogen, however, whether as prussic acid or cyanide of potassium, kills almost instantaneously. In a few seconds he was beyond help. We are told that there is no possible reason to suppose that a deliberate suicide had been planned and carried out under the mask of experiment. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that the Professor has met the fate which befell only too many of the early chemists and their predecessors, the alchemists.

We know now what will happen to any experimentalist if he dips blotting-paper in nitric acid, washes it, dries it, and then incautiously treads upon it. What happened to the man who is believed—for his record perished with him—to have first discovered fulminate of silver is a matter of scientific record. That he was engaged in researches upon the fulminates, and more especially upon the fulminates of the higher metals, was well-known. How it precisely came about that he disappeared as he did will remain a matter of conjecture. There came one day a puff, a slight shock, and a smart noise, as if some one inflated a paper bag and then burst it between his hands. Of the professor himself, of his laboratory, of his apparatus, and of much more within a radius of some yards, not a vestige or trace was left.

So it used to be with the alchemists—the inheritors of the hidden wisdom of Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus. They were always blowing themselves up, or asphyxiating themselves with some noxious vapor. For a man who knows nothing, or next to nothing, of chemistry, it is a very dangerous game indeed to mix together a couple of substances of which he knows nothing, and then bray them in a mortar. Common sulphur is a common stuff enough, so is charcoal, so is nitre, but let an ignorant man mix the three and apply a light to them, and the result will astonish him.

When of old an alchemist was reduced to fragments in this fashion our ancestors had an easy explanation. He was a magician, they said, and the devil had come suddenly and had carried him off. There was a time, between the days of Roger Bacon and those of Davy, Black and Cavendish, when the foul fiend was thus always carrying off alchemists. We know not how it happened. If a man goes into a chemical laboratory and takes up a big beaker and pours into it the contents of the first two bottles that are ready at his hand, the probabilities that he will be reduced to atoms on the spot are sufficiently serious to call for his careful consideration.

Chemistry has given us the balloon; it has put into our hands gunpowder, nitro-glycerine, dynamite, and, above all, fulminate of gold—an explosive so terrible that if an ounce of it be left in a stoppered bottle, its grains falling among themselves by their own weight will create a convulsion sufficient to lay Philadelphia in ruins. It has given us poisons so subtle that, were we to employ such means of warfare, we could sail in a balloon over the camp of the enemy and drop upon it a shell, the bursting of which would kill every human being within a mile of its range.

Then, too, chemistry has given us disinfectants. To the chemists we owe carbolic acid, chloride of lime and permanganate of potash. Chemists have taught us to disinfect our sewers and drains, to ventilate our houses, to burn gas instead of oil and to light our streets with what is more powerful than even gas itself—the electric light. It is to chemistry, indeed, that we owe almost all the comforts of everyday life.

But, on the other hand, the possibilities of chemistry are almost too terrible to be contemplated. As the science at present stands any student can, if he have access to a well-stored laboratory, carry away in a pill box matter sufficient to lay a city in ruins, or to poison the whole community of its inhabitants. The chemist can, as every schoolboy knows, convert water into ice in the centre of a red hot crucible. He can construct a shell the size of a cricket ball which will explode the moment it touches the water and overwhelm in flames a hostile fleet. Indeed, the chemist reduces the world to its original and primal elements. For him, even more than the engineer, nothing is impossible. And yet his power, vast as it is, is limited. He can more easily destroy than construct. He can take life, but he cannot give it. He can level the city with the plain, but he cannot build it again. He can create prussic acid, but he is ignorant of its antidote. The forces at his control are beyond his command; the powers he can evoke he cannot lay.

Table Forks.

We are often disposed to sneer at the Chinese mode of eating their food with chopsticks and fancy they must make very dirty work at their meals, yet they are cleanly compared with the habits of our ancestors of two or three centuries since. At that time, even in the best society, forks were unknown, except among the Italians, who appear to have had them in general use considerably earlier than any other European nation, and are believed to be the inventors, or rather the originators, of the custom of using forks at the table. Forks, however, had long been used for raising meats out of pots or cooking vessels by the Greeks and Romans, and the use of forks for lifting the meat from the seething pots is recorded in the Bible. The Egyptian priests, also, in presenting offerings to the gods, used forks made of bronze. None of these people, however, although familiar with the use of the fork in this manner, had any idea of using the fork at table. The mode of serving meat varies somewhat in different nations. In some countries the head of the house took the joint in one hand, and, with a knife held in the other, severed the meat into suitable pieces for each person. In other cases the joint was passed from hand to hand, each person cutting off sufficient for himself with his own knife, and then passing it to his neighbor, each cutting off the part as suited him. The portion thus cut off was afterward divided into smaller pieces suitable for eating, and conveyed to the mouth by the fingers of the hand unoccupied by the knife.

In many parts of Spain, to this day, table forks are unknown articles. In many taverns in other parts of Europe, knives are not placed on the table, because it is unexpected that each traveller is provided with his own, but as few persons will now eat without forks, landlords are obliged to furnish these, together with plates and spoons. It is curious that although the use of forks has not yet spread all over Europe, yet the savage Feejee Islanders have long had table forks in use. At a time when almost all of Northern Europe was destitute of the article, these people, the most cruel and most ingenious of all the natives of Polynesia, used forks in conveying to their mouths dainty morsels of "long pig" as they called cooked man.

None of the sovereigns of England had forks till the reign of Henry VIII., all, high and low, using their fingers. Queen Elizabeth had several forks presented to her, and although she was seen to use them on state occasions it is doubted if she used them ordinarily.

The use of silver forks, it is said, came from China into Italy, and thence into England. One writer states that at the period of the Revolution (1688) few English noblemen had more than a dozen forks of silver, along with a few of iron or steel. But after this steel forks became an article of manufacture at Sheffield, and they came into general use, having, however, two prongs, and it was only in later times that the three-pronged kind were used. These were originally forged and filed to shape slowly by hand, but in the present mode of manufacture, after the tang, shoulder and shank are formed, a portion is flattened for the prongs, which is then struck up into form by a drop, leaving only a thin film between the tines, which is cleared away by the file. These processes are followed by hardening, tempering, grinding, and polishing and securing the handles.

Although silver forks have long been in use to some extent, it was not until of late years that their use became in any wise common, as very few, even among the wealthy, used them until about fifty or sixty years ago, and the steel ones are still very largely used among the poor.

A minister in the south of Scotland had a parishioner, we are told, who, to show her affection for her pastor, sent him every morning by the hands of her daughter a couple of what she wished him to understand were new-laid eggs for breakfast. The eggs on being delivered were generally warm, as if just taken from the nest; but one morning the minister's maid, on taking the eggs from the girl, observed, "The eggs are no warm the day, Jeannie; are they no fresh?" "Oh ay," said the girl; "they're quite fresh, but my mither couldna get the cat to sit on them this morning."

One who has been there says: "When girls go out to gather autumn leaves they should never take their fellows along. In nine cases out of ten they'll spend more time in trying to gather the fellows than they will in gathering leaves." And in the autumn of their lives many of the girls who gather the fellows now will repent that they did not gather the leaves.

Knowledge of the world must be combined with study, for this as well as better reasons: the possession of learning is always invidious, and it requires considerable tact to inform, without a display of superiority, and to ensure esteem, as well as call forth admiration.

I WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

BY A. L. S.

I wish you a Merry Christmas,
My friends and neighbors all,
Good store of cheer throughout the year,
In cabin, cot, and hall.
May plenty crown your wishes,
May Peace her mantle fling,
That each may be 'neath his roof tree,
As happy as a king.

I wish you a Merry Christmas—
Not one, but o'er and o'er—
And at your gate if misery wait,
Throw open wide the door;
Heap high the blazing Yule-log,
The festive table spread;
Let all whose need is great indeed,
Partake your daily bread.

I wish you a Merry Christmas,
A happy New Year too,
With vigorous heart to play a part
In all you find to do.
So may your roof tree flourish,
Blest be your honest toil;
And year by year may Fortune cheer
The sons of American soil.

POMEROY ABBEY.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD.

AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV—[CONTINUED.]

"My daughters have been too properly reared to allow themselves to become attached where it is not expedient," said she loftily.

"But nature's nature," cried the earl.

"And training's training," retorted the countess. "What if they did see each other sometimes abroad?—he was nothing but a younger son then, and had no more thought of coming into the Pomeroy estates than I had."

"He says she loves him; and he says he ardently loves her," was the only answer the earl gave to this. "I believe he does."

Lady Essington's tart rejoinder was stopped. She heard the duke's voice upon the stairs; and, opening the door saw him passing along the hall. He was departing after his interview with Anna. Lady Essington hastened to accost him; but the duke, ever so far on then, looked back with a cold bow only, and was gone.

She bent her angry and hasty steps to the drawing room, and caught my young Lady Anna in the midst of her waltz. Arresting her by the arm, she swung her round the other way; not very gently.

"What have you been doing to the Duke of St. Ives?"

"Oh, please don't be angry!" implored Anna. "I only told the duke I could not marry him."

"You wicked girl! Not marry him! Not marry St. Ives! Mabel, come here," interrupted the countess, hearing Lady Mabel enter the next room, "look at your sister there: see the figure she cuts! She has been refusing St. Ives."

"You have not?" debated Mabel, slowly speaking to Anna. "You are not quite a fool, *au fond*."

Anna stood with blushing cheeks and drooping eyelids. They might read in her face that it was no fable, the love existing between her and Leolin.

"Mabel, he called St. Ives a bran-new Brummagem duke, or some such vulgarism; and—and"—my lady hardly knew whether to subside into hysterics, or to shake Anna—"your father takes his part; says he shall have her."

"He is the Lord of Pomeroy," observed Anna, in a low tone. "But for the Duke of St. Ives wanting me, mamma, you would never have thought of objecting to him."

"Right, child," exclaimed the earl, who had come in now, and was ready to burst with suppressed laughter. "I say if they had not wanted you to have young Pomeroy, he should not have been allowed to come here."

"But, papa, she has encouraged the duke shamefully; nobody else has had a chance with him; and I do say that to turn round upon him now is not good conduct. Last night that ever was, she went parading his bouquet in his own rooms."

Lord Essington, for all his good nature, had as keen a sense of what was right and wrong as other people. His face wore a displeased look as he turned to Anna. She bit her lips to hide a smile.

"Two bouquets came for me, papa. The one was a beauty, and mamma ordered me to use it."

"But you had no right to use it," screamed the countess "if you meant to reject the duke to-day."

"But it was not the duke's," returned Anna; "the duke's was the one we left at home. It was the Lord of Pomeroy's."

"You little deceitful——" began her mother. But the earl burst into a hearty laugh, which drowned the rest of the reproach.

* * * * * * * *

As will probably have been gathered by the reader, Leolin Pomeroy, unlike his brother George, had lost no time in assuming his new honors, as head of his house. Resigning his diplomatic post at once, he hastened to London, made a flying visit to the abbey, and then went back to London again, all within a week. His attraction was Lady Anna Hetley, whom he had met and seen a great deal of abroad. He had not dared to hope for herwhen he was one of the many nameless, obscure attaches: but he meant to have her now that he was Lord of Pomeroy.

CHAPTER XV.

LADY ANNA.

"What slur is it that lies on the Pomeroy escutcheon? I am almost sure there is one."

The question was put by Lady Geraldine; and her mother at once began to ransack her memory. She fancied she had heard of something disagreeable that happened in the family a few years ago. Lady Esington was not a woman to give up her way or her will without a fight to keep it. She had set her heart upon marrying Anna to the duke, who could hardly count his riches, and she did not choose to be frustrated by the Lord of Pomeroy. This suggestion of Geraldine's was, therefore, as welcome to her as gold; for, if there was a hole in the Pomeroy coat, it was clearly her duty to find it.

Down, on the spur of the moment, went Lady Essington to Lincoln's Inn, to the offices of that noted firm of solicitors, Hildyard and Prael. Mr. Hildyard was the confidential adviser of the Essingtons and of the Pomeroys: if there was anything amiss he would know it. Lady Essington was at once admitted to him—an elderly neat, silent man, who always dressed in black with a white shirt-frill, and was altogether of the old school. It was not the first conference by many that Lady Essington had held with him in that private room of his. Her husband had a vast deal of trouble with their only son, the spendthrift Viscount Cardine, and she liked to interfere sometimes herself.

Home she came to-day, rather dissatisfied. Mr. Hildyard had assured her that he knew of nothing against the Pomeroys—with the exception of the fatal quarrel between Guy and Rupert. Leolin stood as high as a young man could stand; high in character and honor.

"Where's Anna?" she asked of Geraldine almost on entering.

"Papa called her down to the study," was the cross answer. She had had private hopes herself of the new Lord of Pomeroy: and now he had cast upon her the unpardonable slight of passing her over for her younger sister.

The countess hastened to the study to see what treason might be hatching, and the result displeased the countess. Her worst fears were realized—Anna had been told she should wed the Lord of Pomeroy.

It was at this critical juncture that Lady Essington came, in her bonnet on, her shawl not unfastened, just as she had come in from Mr. Hildyard's. When she found that her husband had weakly given his promise, she turned upon him in anger.

"Why, you must be a born idiot, Lord Essington! Think of the duke's money!"

"Money! Oh, ah, he has a good deal of that. More money than brain." And my young Lady Anna, being so far wanting in reverence as to laugh, her mother grasped her arm angrily.

"I have a great mind to shake you undutiful child. Who is he, that Leolin Pomeroy, beside the Duke of St. Ives? The other day he was but a miserable attache."

"But, mamma, he is Lord of Pomeroy now."

She was much excited; her fingers were interlaced, one with another, tears were streaming down. Lord Essington fondly laid his hand upon her head to reassure her.

"And indeed, mamma, for many reasons I cannot marry the Duke of St. Ives. Papa has been so kind as to say that he does not object to the Lord of Pomeroy: if you object, why I must remain unmarried. I could never have any one but Leolin."

"There, there; don't fret," said the earl soothingly. "I've said it, and I'll stick to it. The Lord of Pomeroy is quite rich enough for you and for me, Anna; and your mother would have thought him so, but for St. Ives. You be off upstairs, my dear, and tell Pomeroy I say so. That's he, now gone up, I fancy: I told him he might call for his answer this afternoon."

"You have done a pretty thing!" snapped my lady, as Anna escaped. "Letting the best match in the world go out of the family!"

"One can't be always wise," smiled the earl, ever good-humored. "I am not going to have my children made unhappy for all the line marches in Christendom, yet I confess, looking at the matter with my eyes, the Lord of Pomeroy seems to be an exceedingly suitable match, ay, and a good match for any one of the girls. I say you would have thought so but for getting St. Ives on your brain."

"I have not got St. Ives on my brain."

"But for me, Essington, the girls might go altogether to the dogs. Look at Lucy, because she fell in love with that foolish fellow, Captain Blake, and he with her, you must needs go and let them marry! Of course she has been buried alive ever since at that bog-hole of a place of his, in Ireland, living no doubt upon potatoes: but do you really mean to let her have him?"

"Have whom—Blake? Why she has had him these three years."

"There! Do you aggravate me, or don't you? You know I meant Anna."

"Oh, Anna! I'm sure I thought you were speaking of Lucy. Well, yes; there's no help for it—and I expect she has told Pomeroy so by this time. It is not my fault: I did not choose him; you must acknowledge that, Lucinda."

"But I thought he came for Geraldine," said poor, mistaken Lady Essington, with something very like a sob. "At least, we hoped it. St. Ives was after Anna, and who was to suspect that Pomeroy would interfere with him? I should have been the envy of every house in London had we secured St. Ives."

The earl laughed. To his unsophisticated nature, these anglings after desirable settlements, so rife in the great world, were a source of both wonder and amusement.

Meanwhile, Anna, escaping to her room, effaced the marks of tears from her face and then went to the drawing-room. Leolin, waiting alone, uneasy, full of suspense, turned when the door opened. She closed it, and halted there. He walked towards her: his face grave, his voice low his hand outstretched.

"How is it to be, Anna?" he began with some emotion. "Your father would not give me any answer this morning: he said I must come again."

But the tender light in her blue eyes, the soft blushes that came and went upon her cheeks, told him enough. With a faint cry of pleasure, he caught her to him.

"My darling, I see it! You are to be mine!"

"Papa has left it to me, Leolin."

"And then—and then"—he was kissing her between every interval—"my darling will leave it to me. And I say she must be mine without any unnecessary loss of time."

"Oh, but not yet, Leolin."

"Not yet! Why?" he asked, taking a chair near her.

"Oh, I don't know. It is only just settled—only to-day.

"But it is a great many to-days that we have loved each other. Ah, Anna, what should we have done had I remained the poor attache? What might be in your mind I did not presume to ask then; but I know that I was troubled and tormented beyond measure, feeling that, poor as I was, and with no position, I might not presume to ask for you. Now and again it has crossed my mind to go out to India and beg my good-natured brother George to give me an income. I think he would have done it."

"Was he very good natured?"

"Very. Few natures are so generously good as was that of George Pomeroy. He was the least selfish man I ever knew. He was not married, you know, had no children to provide for; and, I do believe had I gone to him and told him about you that he would have made things easy for us. What of the duke?"

"I saw him after you left. I told him how impossible it was that I should accept him—and, Leolin, I did say that I had longed to give him a hint before, only that of course I could not: young ladies may not speak first. He was very kind when he fully understood how it was, and I said I hoped we should always be good friends."

"To be sure. We will invite him down to Pomeroy. I like St. Ives myself, and —— What a lovely child!"

A little fairy arrayed in white, with delicate features, large, lustrous eyes of light brown, and silky curls, was peeping into the room. Lady Anna held out her hand.

"Come in, Annaline."

The child advanced modestly and timidly Leolin drew her towards him.

"What a gentle little thing! what a sweet expression!" he said aside to Anna. "Who is she?"

"Tell your name to this gentleman, my dear," said Anna.

"Annaline Hetley."

"She is the little daughter of Captain Hetley: his father was papa's first cousin. Frank is a great favorite of papa's" added Anna, changing her language to French, and speaking freely in her very open nature, "and he deserves to be so. But he is very poor, and he was sadly improvident in marrying early. I don't think he has much besides his pay. He fell in love with the daughter of a brother officer, and married her. She was poor. But oh, Leolin, she is one of the best, and most refined, and nicest of women! If any one ever had a treasure in a wife, it is Frank."

"Have you a doll, little one?" asked Leolin, returning to his English again.

"No," said the child. "I gave it to Franky when he was ill. Dere was a dreat big one in a shop, but mamma said it was too dear."

Leolin laughed. "How old are you?"

"I am four, and Franky is five, and Mary is two, and baby is free months. She tan't talk."

"I think I must buy you a great big doll. What would you do with it?"

"I should let Franky nurse it. Franky's ill."

"But Franky has your old one."

"No; he 'queezed it and the b'an fell out."

"Then I think we must get one for you and one for Franky," concluded Leolin, his eyes fixed on the sweet little up-turned face, that seemed, somehow, older than its years.

The child's eyes sparkled. "P'ease let Franky's be the best," she whispered.

"To be sure. Franky's best, and yours better. What a little self-sacrificing maiden it is," added Leolin, "this pretty little Annaline."

Before the day was over, Lady Essington had come round so far as to be gracious to Leolin.

"Did Guy, Lord of Pomeroy, leave any children?" enquired Lady Geraldine that evening of her mother when the family sat alone.

"A girl. No heir."

"I should not care to go to a home already occupied," continued she, for she had not got over her resentment. "I hear the widow lives there."

"She is welcome to live there," interposed Anna, her sweet voice a very panacea for all ills of temper. "The abbey is large enough for more than one household."

"When Anna becomes Lady of Pomeroy, the widow will subside into her proper place," spoke Lady Esington.

"It is usual for the widows of the Lords of Pomeroy to have their own apartments in the abbey," observed Anna. "Leolin has told me a great deal about the Pomeroy customs."

"Oh, the Pomeroys own to all sorts of old customs and traditions, and they think they must obey them: Mrs. Knox was saying so to day," returned Geraldine. "They were always a peculiar and a superstitious race."

CHAPTER XVI.

GUY'S CHILD.

Once more, as in the days gone by, Pomeroy Abbey was raising its proud head aloft, conscious of the presence of its lord. Leolin had come down to see that things should be in suitable readiness for his bride. Six years now, and no lord had been there.

Since the death of Guy, his widow had lived in that part of the abbey which stood between the gateway and the tower. Leolin, wishing to show courtesy to her as his brother's widow (though he never would be able to show her cordiality) decided to leave her in it undisturbed. He would reside in the other part of the front portion, and in the north wing, which adjoined it. How Mrs. Pomeroy would like to be deposed from her state and authority as Lady of Pomeroy—for no other supplanted her—was another question. That fatal night had turned the current of her life. She was now reserved, cold, proud, and had become, as the French happily term it, a devote. Yet how young she was still!—wanting some few years of thirty.

Mrs. Pomeroy had not been entirely without suitors during these six years. Perhaps we ought to say would-be suitors, for only one had ventured to bring matters to a climax. That was Mr. Knox, of the Knoll, a man of good property, and a relative of old Mrs. Knox, who knew the Essingtons. Mr. Knox was the first to try his fate; and he received his answer—an answer which surprised him. Had he presented himself to Mrs. Pomeroy with a proposition to poison her, he could not have been met with greater indignation. She looked ready to strike him—"and, egad, I thought she'd have done it," he said, when telling the tale to a friend later. Mrs. Pomeroy ordered him out of the abbey and the doors to be closed against him. The report of this got wind somehow; it served to deter other aspirants, and Mrs. Pomeroy was left unmolested.

In the business room below sat the new Lord of Pomeroy, and Gaunt, the ex-gentleman-keeper. For Gaunt was not the keeper now. He had given that post up when he took upon himself the control of the property in compliance with the wishes of the late lord, George. They were going over the receipts and expenditure of the last six years; the years that had elapsed since Guy died and George succeeded. Leolin, lord now, thought he had a right to inquire into these items; and Gaunt, courteous ever, afforded him all the information he asked for.

"How well the estate has righted itself," observed Leolin in grateful admiration. "You have been an excellent manager. And were all the revenues, except the portion paid to Mrs. Pomeroy, transmitted to my brother George?"

"Yes. All. I have paid them over to Mr. Hildyard. It was he who transmitted them to your brother."

"I wonder what George did with the money?" cried Leolin, musingly, leaning back in his chair and thrusting his hands into his coat pockets. "He could not spend it; it's not likely he could, out there. I hope he has left a will! If he has left a will, who—I wonder—would come in for the money?"

"His wife and child," spoke Gaunt, who seemed just then to have gone into a reverie on his own score.

"Wife and child! you are dreaming, Gaunt," laughed Leolin. "Were you thinking of poor Guy?"

"Perhaps I was," said Gaunt, rousing himself, and plunging into the books again.

"I should have a share, I suppose; and Joan would, and Isabel; and—would she?"

"Who, sir?"

"Mrs. Pomeroy."

Gaunt answered nothing. His head was bent over his figures again. In half an hour their task was finished, and Gaunt rose, after locking up the desk.

"Then, in a week's time we shall see you here again," he casually remarked to Leolin: who was returning to London on the morrow.

"In a week's time you will see me here again, all being well, and my wife with me. And then," added Leolin, "I shall ask you to resign your trusteeship, Gaunt, and give you many thanks for your faithful stewardship. I mean to go in for work myself."

"I should wish to keep on a little longer," said Gaunt quietly.

"Why?"

"It may be better that I should."

"You are not ready with the accounts, I suppose?"

"Ready at any moment, as far as the accounts go," replied Gaunt. "But—I am not quite ready on other scores."

They stood looking at one another. Gaunt calm, noble, towering in his great height nearly a head above Leolin, who was himself of middle height. Leolin thought Gaunt's manner rather peculiar: and he was suddenly struck with his look of sickness.

"Are you not well, Gaunt?"

"Not very."

"You are frightfully thin. Why don't you speak to Norris?"

"Oh, I don't think it's anything serious, was the careless answer.

"How do you do this morning, Uncle Leolin?" demanded a young lady of some six years old, who came darting into the room. It was Mary Pomeroy Guy's child. She was very nice looking with the large grey Pomeroy eyes, and pretty, features. Her complexion was of that rather dark (or yellow) tinge that sometimes goes with grey eyes, and the color in her cheeks was more like vermillion than rose. She carried her little proud head upright, her fair curls falling back on her neck, and walked with the air of a queen.

"Do you know that old Jerome is outside in the corridor?" she said. "He is waiting to see you."

"Is he?" cried Leolin quickly. "Tell him to come in, there's a little fairy."

"You may tell him yourself, Uncle Leolin. If you are not good to me, I shall not be good to you."

Anything more sturdily commanding than the air of this little lady, as she stood still and resolute, the reader never saw. A daring child was Mary Pomeroy, and she had one of those remarkably sensible knowing, precocious minds that are sometimes looked upon with awe. She would say things more suitable for a girl of sixteen than one of six. Leolin laughed; and Gaunt, who was departing, sent in Jerome.

"How is it you have not been to see me before, Jerome?" asked Leolin shaking hands with the old man. "I have been here these three days."

Jerome made some trifling excuse. 'Twas only yesterday he heard that Mr. Leolin had arrived.

"Well, I went to the Keep yesterday to see you, Jerome, as you did not come to see me, and I could not get in," said Leolin. "You must be fine and lonely there, Jerome! Will you come back to the abbey?"

"Many thanks, Mr. Leolin, but I couldn't return," said the old man, with almost trembling eagerness. "I'm used to my Keep now, sir, and I could not leave it again."

"As you will. Look here, Jerome—is Gaunt a little touched?"

"As you will. Look here, Jerome—is Gaunt a little touched? His manner was certainly queer this morning, and he looks very ill. When I told him I should take the accounts into my own hands, thanking him for his faithful stewardship, he intimated that he could not give them up. The accounts were ready, he said, but he was not."

"Anything that Gaunt says, he must have his good reasons for; be sure of that, Mr. Leolin."

"I like Gaunt," struck in Mary Pomeroy, in her defiant tone, as if it behooved her to take up his championship.

Leolin laughed as he took the young lady's hand.

"I am going to pay a visit to your mother: will you conduct me," said he.

Miss Mary was pleased to do it, and walked up the grand staircase full of importance. She liked patronage of all kinds.

Mrs. Pomeroy was seated in the sombre oak chamber, which faced the quadrangle. Only herself could know what her feelings were, as she gazed on that fatal west tower, or what her repentance was for the foolish part she had played.

Some fine work of silken embroidery was in her hand, which she put down as Leolin entered.

How thin she was!—thin, and worn, and anxious-looking! but her face retained its old beauty, and a soft color flushed her cheeks as she rose to greet the lord of Pomeroy. Leolin had paid her one formal visit on his arrival; he was now paying her a second, preparatory to his departure.

"I must thank you for allowing me to retain these rooms," she said—and there was a harshness in her tones, as there always had been, which grated on the refined ear of Leolin. "I thank you, Lord of Pomeroy, for your courtesy."

"I am pleased that you should retain them; I should not think of wishing you to quit them," spoke Leolin in his natural good feeling. He did not like Mrs. Pomeroy, but she was his brother's widow, and he accorded to her personal deference.

"And I hope," he continued, "that you and my wife, Lady Anna, will be good friends. I am sure you will like her."

"I shall be glad to make Lady Anna's acquaintance," replied Mrs. Pomeroy coldly. And she took up her work again.

Conversation flagged. Leolin had to make it; she answered him by monosyllables, apparently without interest. He rose to terminate his visit.

"Oh, I forgot to ask you one thing," she interposed. "Have you heard any further particulars of your brother George's death?"

"No more than we heard at first," he answered—"that poor George died in action. He went forth in the morning bright and well and in good spirits; and at night he was lying dead on the battle-field. His confidential servant, Moore, is on his way home, I believe. He will bring the details, with George's personal effects and papers. We thought Moore would have landed ere this," added Leolin, as he formally shook hands with Mrs. Pomeroy, and quitted the room.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DICK'S CHRISTMAS.

It was about ten o'clock on the night of Christmas-eve—a good many years ago now—that Dick Allen gave his name at 'Old Trinity College,' Dublin, and passed in. As he looked in at the lodge door, he felt a strong temptation to sit for a while with the two burly good-natured-looking night porters by their roaring fire; for the night was bitter cold, and he felt more thoroughly alone than he ever had before in the two-and-twenty years of his life. But he merely replied to the porters' kindly 'Good-night, sir,' and passed on to his rooms in 'Botany Bay.'

Once within his rooms he lost no time in striking a light, and then set to work to rekindle his smouldering fire. The prospect that the candle revealed was far from cheerful. Everything betokened a recent and rapid fall in the fortunes of the tenant. He, however, had now at last succeeded in rousing into a show of animation the dying embers; and after warming his feet for a few minutes over the blaze, he got up, and, producing a bottle of whisky from his pantry, mixed a glass of 'grog,' and then throwing himself into an arm-chair fell a-thinking.

A perfect stranger to Dick and his story would easily have guessed that the reveries which were bringing such a weary look of almost hopeless wretchedness upon that handsome young face were not over-pleasant ones. Sad enough in all conscience they were, and not without reason. It was now some six months since Dick had fallen out with his father, between whom and himself there had always existed the strongest affection. What was the original cause of quarrel was immaterial. Some trifle, occurring at an inopportune moment, had set at variance two proud and wilful, though loving hearts. Hot and bitter words had been spoken on both sides, and Dick Allen had left his home one night in the summer vacation, refusing all offers of assistance from his father and determined for the future to hold no communication with him. He had never known what it was to want money, and consequently thought that nothing was easier than to get it.

It would be going over again a thrice-told tale to relate the rebuffs and disappointments that he met at every step; how he gradually almost lost faith in himself from repeated failure; how he tried to obtain employment in one way after another and at last began to think that there was no way open to him.

One result of his ill-success in this struggle for a livelihood was that he was gradually compelled to drop the society of his companions; for Dick was far too proud to accept the assistance many of them would have been glad to give him, and he could not bear to live amongst them in his present altered circumstances. Hence it was that for some months he had lived almost alone. And so he had come to lose any delicacy he had had before regarding a resort to the pawnshop; and his furniture and most of his wardrobe had gone very rapidly to supply means for the constant round of dissipation in which he lived, and which had left its mark on his pale, though still handsome and well-bred face.

Yet through all the stages of poor Dick's downward career, he had always one restraining influence upon him which never quite left him. This was the affection he had for his younger sister—as he called her, 'little Kate.'

Their mother had died a couple of years after Kate's birth; and hence it was that she and Dick had clung to one another from childhood. After the quarrel with his father, Dick had regularly corresponded with her, and, knowing her anxiety about him, he had sent her glowing accounts of success and prosperity. It was a great comfort to the good-hearted old Squire to know from her that the son whom he was as fond of as ever was at least not in any difficulty. As to an ultimate reconciliation, the older and wiser man deemed it merely a question of time.

The day before this Christmas eve, however, it had suddenly occurred to him that Christmas-eve would be Kate's birthday, and knowing she would wish to hear from him on that day, he had sat down to write. After a vain effort to control himself and tell the usual tale of success and happiness, the poor fellow had utterly broken down, and in a few almost incoherent sentences told how ill he felt and how hopeless his condition was, and implored Kate to write to him at once, as he did not know how soon it might all end. But it could not last much longer. This he had hurriedly posted, almost careless as to the effect it might have, but now, as he sat gloomily thinking in his arm-chair, he could not help feeling bitter disappointment that he had had no reply. He got up and paced up and down the room.

"She might have telegraphed," he said aloud; "she might even have come up to see me. Though how could she," he said, a moment after, "while she's entertaining a lot of people at home? But she might at least have telegraphed. Good God, if she'd written to me like that, nothing would have kept me from her!"

These reflections added to the bitterness of poor Dick's feelings; for a few minutes more he walked up and down with irresolute steps, then suddenly stopped for a moment, as it were to collect himself, took a bottle from his breast pocket, and setting it down on the table, brought a wine glass from the pantry. "As well do it now, as at another time," thought poor Allen, as he held the glass up to the light and began pouring the laudanum into it drop by drop. He had counted about thirty drops, when suddenly he heard the first clang of the bells commencing the Christmas chimes. Somehow the sound compelled him to stop and listen, and he laid down the bottle and glass. Then, as he listened, he could not help going over in memory the many times when, on this night of the year, he had stood in his father's house, with his sister by him, and wished her many a happy birthday; and he thought of what that sister's feelings would be were she to hear the next morning that he had died a suicide. Thus he stood thinking until the chimes had ceased; and then, softened and more calm, he turned to the table, and said to himself, "Not on this night at any rate. To-morrow I may be able to do it, so that no one may know how I died." Then it struck him that the laudanum he had already poured out would at least procure him what he seldom enjoyed now—sound sleep; so, filling up the wine-glass with water, he sat down again by the fire, and in a few minutes was fast asleep.

Now while poor wayworn Dick was heavily sleeping under the influence of that gentle poison, laudanum, events were transpiring far away that strangely influenced his fate.

At the Allenstown drawing-room there had been a grand party in Kate's honor, and just as they were ushering in the Christmas morning in came the old butler with the letters. Kate had a whole bundle of them, amongst which she saw in a moment one with Dick's well-known hand-writing. After reading for a few moments she suddenly turned deadly pale and almost fainted. Restraining herself, however, like a brave girl as she was, she made some excuse for leaving the room, and rushed to the Squire's sanctum, where she knew he had just gone. She shut the door and said,

"O, Squire, read that!" putting into his hands poor Dick's broken hearted scrawl.

The Squire read, and gasped out:

"Good God! My poor boy, my poor boy! What is to be done? If I had only known!"

"O father," cried Kate, "couldn't we stop the night mail at Knockrath? They'll do it for you."

"God help us," said the squire; "the mail passes at five minutes to two, and it's more than half-past one already. Stay, though," he added, after a moment; there's just a chance."

He opened the door and went at once into the kitchen, followed by Kate.

"Quick," said the Squire to the servants, who were all at high jinks, "some of you fetch Jim Cassidy!"

In a minute in came Jim, a fine specimen of a young Irishman, the rough-rider and trainer of the establishment, who had carried the Squire's colors to victory on more than one race course.

"Jim," said the Squire, "I want you to ride for your life to Knockrath, and tell the station master from me to stop the up-mail and keep it a few minutes; we'll be after you. Take Saucy Kate; she's about the fastest."

"Is it the chaser—" Jim was beginning in anything but a satisfied tone, when Kate said,

"Oh, Jim, it's for me, and please ride fast."

"For you, miss?" cried Jim. 'Then, bedad, if the gray mare doesn't put her best leg foremost, you may say I'm no horseman."

In a minute or two the gray mare was at the back door and Jim Cassidy, booted and spurred, was off.

In an almost incredibly short space of time (though it seemed long enough to Kate) the mail phæton was brought round and Kate, muffled up to her eyes in furs, and with a driving-cloth of her father's outside of all, was seated in it, and in a moment more the Squire was driving as if he meant to overtake Jim on the gray steeplechaser. Suffice it to say Jim did his work like a man; got up just in time to have the signals set for stopping the train; and after a few minutes' delay the train was off again to Dublin, carrying Kate and the Squire on their errand of love.

While they are coming to him as fast as steam can bring them, let us take our story-teller's privilege and fly swifter even than that to poor Dick's cheerless chamber. There he lay sleeping peacefully, heedless of the bitter cold and the fast-expiring fire. He dreams that he is going home for the Christmas as he used to go. He gets out at the well known station; there is old Tom Ryan waiting for him with the dog-cart. Now he is up and has the reins in his hands, and they are off along the old road to Allenstown; and Tom is explaining to him that 'Miss Kate would have come to meet him, but has to entertain the people on her birthday; but sure he'll be home in time for lunch.' And now, with the speed of a dream he is within the Allenstown gates and dashing up the avenue. A moment more and he is in the hall, and there are his father and Kate— But what is this? The sleeper is dimly conscious of some break in his dream; there is a moment of vague bewildering effort to awake; and then Dick, struggling to sit up, finds his hand clasped in his father's, and hears the well-known voice, 'My poor Dick, my poor Dick!' And then a muffled figure comes to the front, and before Dick is well awake he is in Kate's arms. When he was fully awake and realised the whole scene, he fairly broke down and burst into tears; and there was a queer huskiness in the Squire's voice (he had seen the laudanum bottle on the table) as he said, "Dick, old fellow, we've both been hasty, but we'll say no more about that. Come along; there'll be just time to get some breakfast at the Gresham, and then we'll catch the 8:30, and be at home for luncheon." He spent a fairly merry Christmas; and I have never heard that Kate caught any cold or other ailment from her midnight trip to Dublin.

FACETIÆ.

The feathered tribes—The Indians.

A home journal—The grocer's book.

Real estate conveyances—Dirt carts.

A lap of luxury—A cat eating cream.

Sound money—The orchestra's salary.

"Hands" that work by time—A clock's.

A speaking likeness—Your twin brother.

Advice to an infuriated printer—"Compose yourself."

The sky, unlike man, is most cheerful when the bluest.

"Six into four you can't," as the shoemaker suggested to the lady customer.

The Chinese have a sure way of removing dandruff. They do it with a jack-plane.

A moralist says that contentment is just as good as money. That's so; and it's just as scarce.

"There is now nothing to mar our happiness," was how Jones told of his mother-in-law's departure.

He saw a negro smoking a new meerschaum. "Gracious!" he exclaimed; "why the pipe's coloring him."

"No man can help you as you can help yourself," is an old saying, and the histories of the penitentiaries will attest the truth of it.

Archie, "See how I am hunted after; all these are invitations." Friend, "Good gracious! all invitations? Invitations to what?" Archie, "To call and settle their accounts."

The man who made a shoe for the foot of a mountain is now engaged on a hat for the head of a discourse—after which he will manufacture a plume for General Intelligence.

Scene, or rather heard, on a tram-car: Conductor, "There a'n't no seats, ladies, unless you want to stand." One of the ladies, "Well, I won't ride if I've got to walk."

A Mississippi mule has been having regular shakes of the ague, and when the chill comes on, he goes and tramples on the flower-beds, so as to have someone to come and warm him up.

An advertising tallow-chandler modestly says that, "without intending any disparagement to the sun, he may confidently assert that his octagonal spermaceti are the best light ever invented."

SICK HEADACHE, LANGUOR and Melancholy, generally spring from a Torpid Liver, a Disordered Stomach or Costiveness, the distressing effects of which Dr. Jayne's Sanative Pills will speedily remove; by their beneficial action on the biliary organs they will also lessen the likelihood of a return.

CHRISTMAS TIME.

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Heap on more wood!—the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deemed the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer:

* * * * * *

And well our Christmas sires of old
Loved when the year its course had rolled,
And brought blithe Christmas round again,
With all the hospitable train.
Domestic and religious right
Gave honor to the holy night;
On Christmas eve the bells were rung,
On Christmas eve the mass was sung;
That only night in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dressed with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merry men go,
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then opened wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside;
And ceremony doffed his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose;
The lord, underogating, share
The vulgar game of "post and pair."
All hailed, with uncontrolled delight,
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.

The fire, with well dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue coated serving man;
Then the grim boar's head frowned on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green garbed ranger tell,
How, when, and where the monster fell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassail round in good brown bowls
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trowls.
There the huge sirloin reeked; hard by
Plum porridge stood, and Christmas pie;
Nor failed old Scotland to produce,
At such high tide, her savory goose.
Then came the merry maskers in,
And carols roared with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mummings see
Traces of ancient mystery.
White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;
But, oh! what maskers richly dight
Can boast of bosoms half so light?
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broached the merriest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft would cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.

The Christmas Tree.

BY LUCAS.

It was one of the seven wonders of the world to the inhabitants of Furzeby that Frank Geith did not marry. A bachelor, young, good-looking and rich, he bestowed no more attention on the female part of the population, after three years' residence amongst them, than he did the first week of his arrival. The entertainment once given for his special benefit, had been long discontinued as a "bad job," as none of the young ladies were in the least benefited by the attentions bestowed upon him; and everybody was getting remarkably rusty from constant intercourse with nobody but the members of their own family, when one Christmas, it might have been last year, the Squire of Furzeby resolved to brush up the people and make the place less dead-alive. His own family consisted of a son and daughter, both very young. The boy was expected home from Eton for the Christmas vacation, and the little girl would be released from the trammels of school room and governess for a month's holiday; so Mr. and Mrs. Howard resolved to make up a large party in the house, and have real Christmas fun and jollity.

The programme consisted of a Christmas Tree on Christmas Eve, to be succeeded by games for the children; a large dinner party every night intervening between Christmas Day and New Year's Day, when there was to be a grand ball; Twelfth Night should be celebrated by amateur-theatricals; with luncheon and tea-parties might drop in between, as occasion required.

Of course Frank Geith was invited. "If you have nothing better to do, or no engagement elsewhere, I hope you will join our party. You'd better bring your traps, and stay at the house; gentlemen will be in the minority," said the hospitable squire, meeting his young friend in the High Street, towards the end of December. "You'll be rewarded for your pains, let me tell you; I shall have one of the nicest, prettiest of little ladies you ever saw, no relation of mine, mind you, a poor little orphan, but as I tell you, one of the dearest of children; and we have also an acknowledged London beauty coming too; so between you you ought to bring about something. Good-bye, don't forget; come as early as you can."

With a cordial grip of the hand, Mr. Howard parted from Geith, who wended his way back to the Lodge, with his usual imperturbable countenance and measured stride.

The drawing-room at the Hall was warm and bright with firelight. Groups of grown up people and children were scattered about, and over all was a genial look of brightness and content. The young children were in a painful state of expectation for the great event of the evening, the Christmas Tree, and the unusual amount of high spirits was countenanced by their elders in the most lenient manner possible—for who can scold at Christmas? No angry words or grave looks were allowed; and even Frank Geith had entered into the spirit of the evening, and was the centre of quite the noisest group in the room.

The squire exchanged glances with his wife, who advanced to the merry group, which was gradually increasing in numbers, attracted and fascinated by its centre.

"What is the joke, Mr. Geith?" she asked. "You are making these madcaps as wild again as they ought to be."

"I fear I must plead guilty, Mrs. Howard," he replied, "but your young Etonian must have his share too; his lively imagination exceeds everything I ever met with."

The mother glanced proudly at her handsome son, but with a smiling reproof turned from him to the little girl sitting edgeways on the big chair.

"Grace, dear," said she, "I'm afraid you are in Miss Dalton's way."

"Oh no, Mrs. Howard, she is not in the least," replied Miss Dalton. "Mr. Geith has been trying to impress that fact upon me; but he has signally failed;" she added, and the merry brown eyes looked up into Frank's face with an odd mixture of shyness and sauciness in their depths.

He bent his head a little, and said in a low voice, "Next time I shall use threats."

"Which will be as powerless," she replied in the same tones.

"Mind what you say," said Frank. "Remember the forfeit."

"I am not afraid," was the laughing rejoinder.

"Suppose you all change your positions, and come out into the hall," said Mrs. Howard. "Reginald, my son, you lead the way."

With wonderful alacrity for him, Frank cleared a passage for the ladies, and one and all trooped out of the wide doorway into the hall; and there, amidst the full blaze of lighted wax tapers, stood the dark fir tree, its branches laden with toys, confectionery and fruit.

The gentlemen's hands were all instantly busy in unloading the tree, and the hum of voices grew gradually louder and louder, as to each recipient was handed his or her gift from the tree. All the presents were ticketed with the receiver's name, and no little anxiety pervaded the youthful mind, as one after another the articles were taken down, the name called, and the happy one took the present, and with a light smile and blush, retired to show it to the glistening eyes of companions.

Hanging rather high up, and conspicuous amongst the dark green foliage, was a small, white square box, containing a gold locket, in the shape of a heart, and in the centre of which was a tiny coral crown, a perfect imitation of holly berries. Frank Geith, being the tallest, reached it from its high position, and holding it up to the light to read the name, called out in clear firm tones, "Winnie Dalton." He had to repeat it before the young girl came forward. She took it from his hand without looking up; then turning to the kind donor, bestowed her thanks in words of tremulous gratitude.

Grace Howard with her little companions crowded round with exclamations of delight, that "dear pet Winnie had got that pretty present—the best on the tree."

"Then it ought not to have been for me," she said; and glancing round the hall she encountered Frank Geith's eyes full upon her, resting with a gaze of strange interest on the fair young profile, now lighted up with the bright falling hair, and soft gazelle eyes sparkling through tears of genuine happiness.

The game that concluded the evening's gaiety were many and various in choice.

The following day was as quiet as it could well be, under the circumstances, but the young people were only just able to obey the mandate "to keep off the frozen pond, for that day only." The day was glorious in sunshine and dazzling frost, and breakfast over, the whole party were *en route* for the ice. Smooth, glossy and slippery it lay, like a sheet of glass, and the skates were on in a twinkling, and slides were marked out with wonderful rapidity.

"Where are your skates, Miss Dalton?" asked Frank.

"I have none; I do not know how to skate," was the dolorous reply.

"Oh, but you must learn. Wait an instant," said Frank; and he was off and back again before her dissenting voice could be raised. "Here, I have borrowed Grace's—they'll fit you. Sit down on the plank and I will fasten them on."

"But I cannot let you lose your sport," she said.

"But suppose I say it will be no loss," said Frank, who would listen to no objections; and with his own hands he fastened the skates to the pretty little Balmoral boots, and the interesting lesson began.

"Put down your muff," said he, "and give me your hands—they will be warm enough if I hold them, and guide your feet as I tell you. Oh, don't be frightened—you won't fall. Now we're off—one, two. It's quite safe; we will go slowly at first, till you're used to it."

The skating lesson progressed so well that before luncheon Frank's little pupil could go up and down the ice without the necessity of help, though she still kept a pretty tight clasp over one hand. Miss Cameron, the London belle, performed her grand figures with town-bred grace and ease, contemptuously turning up her nose at Winnie Dalton's blunders, and Frank's reiterated assurances of final success. Mr. Howard looked on, and pretty correctly made up the sum total of that "little game."

Each day was celebrated by festivities of some kind or another; and while the frost lasted there was no lack of fun out of doors; but unfortunately, Jack Frost is just as fond of being out of season as in season; and the New Year was ushered in by drizzling rain. But all made the best of the weather. Mrs. Howard was superintending the arrangements of the ball-room, but found time to look in occasionally upon her guests. Just after luncheon, the lady entered the drawing-room during a lively discussion, the subject of which was, what should be worn on this auspicious night.

"Mamma," said little Grace, "Winnie says she wont wear your pretty present, and it would be just the thing for Christmas time, as it has the little scarlet berry crown. Is it not provoking of her?"

Mrs. Howard laughed, and Miss Cameron, pulling the child up to her, whispered, "Go and ask Mr. Geith to persuade your friend; he will be invincible."

The child, quite ready to obey, ran to that gentleman.

"Mr. Geith, do tell Winnie to wear what she's asked," said the child. "She is a great deal more obstinate than she looks."

If Miss Cameron, by her small intrigue, wished to have a little of Geith's attention, she was certainly "sold," for Frank, after a few minutes, left the ladies and gentlemen to their own devices, and followed Mrs. Howard and Winnie Dalton, who were helping and making suggestions to the servants, all as busy as bees and merry as larks, under the cheering influence of Christmas, though it was raining.

Frank's sauntering step startled Winnie as her nimble fingers were arranging a bouquet of hot-house flowers for the supper-table. Her sudden flush of surprise seemed to gratify the young man, and he stood watching her.

"What a shame it is of you, Miss Dalton," he said, "to desert the interesting subject under discussion!"

"Their plans and choice of dress do not concern me in the least," said Winnie.

"I know you were ever an independent young lady," said Frank, "but if it is not impertinent, what are you going to wear?"

The soft brown eyes lifted themselves to his face with a questioning glance.

"I never wear anything but white in the evening," she replied.

"But what will you do with all these beautiful tresses of gold?" he continued, reaching out his hand and touching them gently.

"They will take care of themselves," was the reply.

"You are right in putting no ornament," said Frank; "they want none."

This grave-spoken compliment rather disturbed her equanimity, and she said, nervously, "As you know I'm independent, you might also know I dislike compliments."

"The general accompaniment of independence," said Frank. "However, will you depend upon me to do anything for you at Furneby? I am going to ride over this afternoon."

"Thank you; but I don't want anything to day," she replied." "But surely you're not going in all this pouring rain. You ought not to be out in this wet," she added, and her fair face looked quite interesting.

Frank withstood it bravely, only saying, "I'm sorry I can do nothing for you. It might serve as an excuse for such an independent mode of action: so good-bye for the present."

He sauntered out again, and in a few moments Winnie Dalton saw from the window of the ball-room the tall equestrian cantering down the avenue, the short pea-jacket buttoned up to his chin, on his head the round hat, beneath which the bright curls played hide-and-seek.

Frank was not back again until darkness had set in. Meanwhile, the ball-room had put on its festive garb, and the glistening holly leaves and sparkling berries were reflected with a kind of sombreness in the flickering firelight, and Winnie Dalton lingered after the others had left the room, glancing round with pardonable pride at much that was her own handiwork, when again the sauntering step she knew so well fell on her ear, and Frank Geith stood in the doorway. Some sudden emotion had disturbed that calm exterior, for, advancing impetuously towards the solitary figure of the girl, he took both her hands in his own, and drew her to the light.

"Oh Winnie, forgive me," said he, "but I could not resist the temptation of putting that present on the tree for you. I ought to have confessed it before, but I have not had an opportunity, and I waited till I could give you the real crown. Will you wear it? Wear both to night, and let me call you mine."

Still holding one hand, he drew from his breast-pocket a small parcel, and unwrapping it, displayed to view a finely chased gold band for the head, studded with coral, so like in pattern and workmanship to the gift from the Christmas Tree, as to form a set. As he laid it on her golden hair, her head was bowed in very humbleness, but she said not a word.

"My little queen," said he, "look up and speak to me; this omnious silence is tantalising."

"Oh Frank, this is all too good for me," she said.

"Oh Winnie, you are a very timid little child. Don't you know me or my propensities by this time?" he said, drawing her closer, and lifting her face with her hand, bending his head, and taking from her lips the answer he liked best. "I have crowned you the belle of the evening; and you have crowned my happiness. Are you content, my fairest?"

"I have as much cause to be happy as yourself," she replied; "I wish for nothing more."

Frank's reply to that pretty little speech was unimportant, but it gave satisfaction to both parties.

* * * * *

"Ah, you sly dog, so you know my little friend before!" said Mr. Howard. "You certainly deserve to pay a premium for your knowledge."

"On the principle of 'give and take,'" said Frank. "Nay, Mr. Howard, our mutual debt is paid." Turning to his promised bride, he drew her towards him, adding, "My wife will be more than an ornament to her husband. She will be the crown of his life. I have known her through trouble and adversity, and it has been the desire of my life to win her for myself."

"But what will the Furzeby young ladies say to you, after all their attentions, if this is the reward?" asked Mr. Howard, laughing.

What they please," replied Frank.

THE PEACOCK HALL.—Formerly in one of the Delta, India, palaces, stood the famous peacock throne, so called from its having the figures of two peacocks standing behind it, their tails being spread, and the whole so inlaid with sapphires, rubies, emeralds, pearls and other precious stones of appropriate colors as to represent life. The throne itself was 6 feet long by 4 broad. It stood on six massive feet, which, with the body, were of solid gold, inlaid with rubies, emerald and diamonds. It was surmounted by a canopy of gold supported by twelve pillars, all richly ablazoned with costly gems, and a fringe of pearls ornamented the borders of the canopy. Between the two peacocks stood the figure of a parret, of the ordinary size, said to have been carved out of a single emerald. On either side of the throne stood chatts, or umbrella, one of the Oriental emblems of royalty. They were made of crimson velvet, richly embroidered and fringed with pearls. The handles were about eight feet long, of solid gold, and studded with diamonds. The cost of this superb work of art has been variety stated at sums varying from $5,000,000 to $30,000,000.

NIGHT IN CHINESE CITIES.—As soon as night falls in the Chinese cities, each housekeeper, rich or poor, mandarin or mechanic, must light the lantern which stands at his door. At both ends of the street there is a wooden barrier which is closed at dark, and sentries posted at these barriers will permit of neither ingress nor egress, unless the applicant can show good cause for his absence at home. Watchmen patrol the street during the whole night, who, instead of crying the hour, show their vigilance by striking a tube of bamboo every fifteen minutes, causing a dull, hollow sound, which it takes Europeans some time to become accustomed to and sleep through.

CASTE AMONG THE INDIANS.—The state of communism in which American Indians live generally permits no privileged class among them, and the girls of the chief walk in single file along the wood trail under just as heavy burdens as are carried by the daughters of the others who have no rank or standing whatever in the village. Liberty, equality, and fraternity among the children are a patent fact. There are no heart-burnings caused by wealth here or high public position. The boys are never known to have quarreled among themselves because the father of one was richer than the father of the other, and the little girls never attempt or think of quessing it over one another on the strength of better dresses and their mother's carriage.

AN INTELLIGENT COMMENTATOR.—The stupidity of commentators has become a proverb, but perhaps no richer illustration of it was ever given than the following annotation on a familiar line from Gray's Elegy, which we find in a work recently published for the instruction of youth:

"Melancholy marked him for her own."

"Marked him for her own. 'In allusion to the custom of marking cattle, etc., with the name or initial of their owner. The poet here means that he was of a melancholy disposition.'"

Elsie's Vanity.

BY SOPHIA LYNE.

The vanity of the fair sex, it is said, is of the same age as the sex itself. A clever writer, in defending this trait of the feminine character, has said that it constitutes its greatest charm; that without it, the sex would lose half its attraction; and in support of this theory there is the old quaint story of the German maiden; a history which is so tender and pretty, that it is worth rescuing from the forgotten legends of the Fatherland.

A maiden lived on the banks of the Rhine with her father, the miller.

Now the maiden, whose name was Elsie, was not pretty, and she was cross and fretful, for she grieved for her own lack of beauty, and thought that none should ever care for her on account of the few graces that Nature had given to her; so she did not even try to please, and yet her heart was very large and very kindly.

She spent half her time in front of her looking-glass, lamenting her plainness, and thinking how impossible it was that Carl would ever learn to love her, while Gretchen, who was so fair and pretty that she was called "The Daughter of Spring" dwelt near her.

Elsie was not loved, for she had never tried to gain love. She always fancied that it would be in vain to endeavor to please, in vain to be kind, thoughtful, and loving.

When Nature had so slighted her, who could care for her, or think of her, or be interested in her?

"Ah!" she sighed one day, "if I could but have Gretchen's beauty, I should be the happiest girl in the Fatherland, for then I should not fear any rival; and Carl, sunny-haired Carl, might love me."

But Carl never came near her now, and only thought of her as cross and fretful Elsie, and wished Gretchen had had less vanity with her pretty face, and a rather larger heart in her slim body.

One day—it was in the time of the vintage—Elsie went down to the Rhine to bring in water, and, as she dipped her pails in the clear ripples, she saw her own face reflected, and turned away, wretched and discontented.

She sat down on a rocky stone, and watched the sunlight playing on the castle crowned hills, and listened to the far-off song of the workers in the vineyards; and she thought of Carl, who was there, and of Gretchen, who was there also.

"Ah, me," she sighed, "what a gift is beauty!"

"Elsie," said a voice, and, looking up, she saw an old woman, a very old, deformed woman, standing near to her, "Elsie," she said, "I will tell you the secret of beauty, and you shall obtain all that you long for so much. Go home, and never look in a glass, never see the reflection of your own face in the water, never once again gaze on your own features, and you will grow pretty—so pretty, that all will wonder at the change; and Carl—Carl will learn to love you."

"Oh, I will never see my face again as long as I live—never, never!" said Elsie. "But are you sure, quite sure."

"Quite sure," replied the dame; "but remember, if you once see your own face, your ugliness will return. Now go home, and be light of heart, and every day your lack of beauty will grow less, and every day more love will hover round you."

"But how shall I know that it is true, if I may not see my face?" asked Elsie.

"Can you not tell by the altered manner of those around you?" said the dame.

"Oh, yes," said Elsie; "how I will watch them!"

Elsie went home with a new and strange happiness at her heart, a happiness that changed her nature, and influenced every day of her life, and made her amiable, and loving, and kind, and considerate, and anxious to please, and ready to serve and help others.

Presently people began to remark the alteration in the miller's daughter, and to tell her how different she was from formerly, and the maidens sought her out and talked to her about their lovers, and the youths declared that Elsie, the miller's daughter, was the nicest girl that side of the Rhine, and Carl learnt to think how different she was from Gretchen, and he learnt to love her, and through the Fatherland there was not so happy a girl as Elsie.

And all this time she never once saw her own face, but turned away her head when she slipped her pails in the stream, and through all the miller's house there was not to be found a looking-glass. She longed (ah, how much!) to see herself in her new garb of beauty; but she remembered the old woman's warning, and conquered her desire.

In the Spring time came her wedding-day, and early in the sweet fresh morning she was married to Carl, and the young flowers peeped out to see her face as she passed by, and the tender grass kissed her feet as she went along, and the birds sang out a greeting, and even the light feathery clouds seemed to stoop over her head, as if with their shadowy hands they blessed her on her bridal day. Ah, happy Elsie!

"Thou art so changed!" said Carl. "Thy face is so different from what it formerly was. It does not seem to me that it is possible thou art the same Elsie. I used to pass without even looking back to gaze on thee; but to-day in thy bridal veil thou art a sweet picture, which memory will paint on my heart forever."

Elsie felt herself thrilled with happiness, but never once told the secret of that change, though she herself did not know that the real secret lay in her own changed nature.

Now presently they were all feasting; and Elsie, longing to be alone for a few minutes with her wonderful happiness, crept down to the side of the Rhine, and thought over the past.

"Ah, and he said I am so altered too! Happy Elsie, thou art indeed altered! And he said how pretty I looked in my bridal veil. Do I, I wonder? What would I not give to see myself!"

Elsie was forgetting, as she longed to see herself, how strict had been the old woman's warning. She stood on the edge of the water with her face turned away; but her vanity kept saying to her, "Look once, for a single moment, Elsie, and see thyself on thy bridal day;" but she hesitated and longed, and wondered if punishment would really follow if she looked. "It cannot make any difference," she thought, and she moved her head a little way—a very little way round—till she could just see the shape of her head reflected in the water, and it seemed quite strange to her, for she had not seen it for so long.

"I must, oh I must see the face that my Carl loves!" she said; and forgetting the happiness she might lose in this offering to her vanity, she turned and looked at her reflection in the water, and she saw—what? the same plain face that she remembered long ago; the same, the very same, without one feature altered!

With a scream of despair she tottered forwards a step too far, and before she could recover herself, she fell into the water which had shown her the dreadful truth. The tide bore her away, and never again was seen the miller's daughter—Carl's young bride. Alas for Vanity!

THAT CHICKEN PIE.

BY S. A. M. MOSS.

Many is the hoary-headed sinner I have heard remark that God does not answer prayers except in his own good time and way. I always on such occasions say mentally, "perhaps he may not answer yours, and he does not answer mine, except in that manner, but then we may not have the true faith of which our Saviour speaks 'even as a grain of mustard seed.'"

There was Captain Henderson's wife, she hadn't much but faith; she had seen better days, as old Mr. Snyder remarked; he knew the time when Henderson's wife wouldn't have asked odds of anybody, but things do change in this world and as a natural consequence we are obliged to change with them if we want to keep in fashion; so it happened that as Fortune turned her wheel there came a time when Henderson's wife was a widow with two small children to support, and as I stated further back she had little but faith to do it with.

She hated to part with her dear little girls although many a rich lady offered to adopt one of them, and considered herself ill used if her offer was kindly but firmly declined.

"I will take care of you and keep you together and with me, my darlings, as long as God spares my health," Mrs. Henderson would say, and the dear little children would nestle close to her, and kiss her, and bless her, and comfort her.

Mattie was seven now and quite a little woman, Ethie was four and a dear little girl she was.

But however dear or beautiful as the children of the very poor may be, there is not much time their parents can spend in admiring and showing them off.

So it was with Mrs. Henderson; she sewed and knit and washed and; cleaned whatever her hand found to do that she did with her might, while Mattie and Ethie spent the greater part of the bright days in picking up the bits of coal and wood that the wealthier did not care to save.

In this way the mother and children managed to live together and keep a roof over their heads.

Christmas was coming, however, and Mrs. Henderson would gladly have made some little preparation to keep it in the good old way of prayer and feasting. But it seemed, at the best she could do, it would be but a day of prayer and fasting. Still she had repeatedly asked of the Lord that he would bless and prosper her a little more than usual that she might prepare some little temporal blessing in the shape of a Christmas dinner for her dear, dear children.

Now Mrs. Henderson had a neighbor Mrs. Watson, who was not deplorably poor and many a good turn had this lady done her.

Mrs. Watson was planning day and night, to save a few pennies, by extra economy, that Mrs. Henderson and her children might not pass Christmas entirely without a taste of good cheer. But as has been said "Man proposes, God disposes." So it proved that the day before Christmas was rather cloudy. Mattie and Ethie were viewing the toys in the shop windows and the goodies everywhere displayed, when a lady went hurrying along the street. She had an umbrella in her hand and several small bundles on her arm; just then the sleet began to fall; the lady raised her umbrella; in her haste she let fall from her arm a bundle. Mattie saw it, and ran to restore it to the owner, but the lady, entirely unconscious of her loss hastened forward and was lost to them among many other ladies who carried umbrellas.

"Let us run home to mother," said Ethie, "she will tell us what to do."

Mrs. Henderson opened the parcel. It contained a nice fat chicken, but Mrs. Henderson had not money enough to advertise it and she had no other way of ascertaining its owner.

Assisted and advised by Mrs. Watson she boiled it until tender and then made it into a chicken pie.

Somehow too Mrs. Watson happened to get too much mixture for some plum pudding, and Mrs. Henderson felt obliged to accept the overplus after it was becomingly baked in a small earthen dish.

And such a lovely Christmas dinner as the Hendersons did have.

Still there are people who will affirm it true that things do happen so sometimes.

WOMEN IN OLD RUSSIA.—Two hundred years ago, in Russia, woman was banished from all the rude hospitalities, social enjoyments, and court revels of the time. She lived in Oriental seclusion, but not in luxury. She was the slave of her lord and master; must not sit in his presence, or eat at the same table. Sometimes her spirit rebelled, her courage rose, and with a dagger or poisoned cup she freed the earth and herself from a tyrant. But what, then, was her fate? He might have struck her down with impunity, but she, unless she had arranged to fly to the protection of the more powerful, and perchance more humane, than he, was seized immediately, loaded with fetters, and her tongue cut out. Had she not profanely dared to speak reproachfully of her lord, and lifted her sacrilegious hand against him? Cut it off then; brick her up in a wall, or bury her in the earth up to her chin, and there let her slowly die, a warning to disobedient and rebellious wives.

THE TURKISH TONGUE.—The Turks are of Tartar origin, and their language is a Tartar dialect, and while the language is very regular in its grammatical construction, it is poor in words. To remedy this defect the Turks have drawn from the Arabic and Persian language, to such an extent that a thorough knowledge of the Turkish cannot be acquired without a knowledge of the other. The Turks use the Arabic characters, and write, after the manner of the Jews and Arabians, from right to left.

SINGULAR FOOD.—The Burmese, in India, have a remarkable relish for the most strongly flavored food. Living as they do, either by the sea or on the banks of rivers and creeks, it is natural that fish should form one of the commonest ingredients of the food of the people. But instead of using it fresh, it is first allowed to decay to complete rottenness, and is then in some way pickled and pounded into a sort of paste, which is greedily devoured.

Fortitude is so becoming in human nature that he who wants it scarce deserves the name of man.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

DIVISIBILITY OF GOLD.—A grain of gold has been found to admit of being divided into ninety-five thousand millions of visible parts; that is, by the aid of a microscope magnifying one thousand times.

SPEED OF SOUND.—In ordinary conditions of the atmosphere, sound has been found to travel at the rate of 1,118 feet per second at the temperature of 61 degrees, but travels much faster in a more rarefied atmosphere, and upon high mountains this is very evident. The measure of the height of a rocket at the moment of explosion can not, in consequence, be made according to the ordinary rule.

TO TAKE RUST OUT OF STEEL.—Place the article in a bowl containing kerosene oil, or wrap the steel up in a soft cloth well saturated with kerosene; let it remain 24 hours or longer; then scour the rusty spots with brickdust. If badly rusted, use salt wet with hot vinegar; after scouring, rinse every particle of brickdust or salt off with boiling hot water; dry thoroughly; then polish off with a clean flannel cloth and a little sweet oil.

TO MAKE CORKS AIR-TIGHT OR WATER-TIGHT.—A German paper commends the use of paraffine as the best method of making porous corks gas-tight and water-tight. Allow the corks to remain for about five minutes beneath the surface of melted paraffine in a suitable vessel, the corks being held down either by a perforated lid, wire screen, or similar device. Corks thus prepared, the writer says, can be easily cut and bored, have a perfectly smooth exterior, may be introduced and removed from the neck of a flask with ease, and make a perfect seal.

A NEW ALLOY.—According to a German metallurgical journal the following new and interesting metallic alloy, which is called bismuth bronze, is well adapted to the manufacture of metallic mirrors, lamp reflectors, and other surfaces which are required to remain bright, as it does not tarnish or oxidize readily; copper, 52 parts; nickel, 30 parts; zinc, 12 parts; lead, 3 parts, and bismuth, 1 part. This alloy can be cast without difficulty and fills the mould well; and the quantity of bismuth, which gives it its name, is not sufficient to render it very expensive for the purpose required.

RESULTS OF INTERMARRIAGE.—After searching investigation, an English scientist concludes that the "widely different habits of life of men and women in civilized nations, especially among the upper classes, tend to counterbalance any evil from marriage between healthy, closely-related persons." These views are in a measure sustained by the report on the commune of Batz. Batz is a rocky, secluded, ocean-washed peninsula of the Loire, France, containing over three thousand people of simple habits, who don't drink, and commit no crime. For generations they have intermarried; but no cases have occurred of deaf-mutism, albinism, blindness, or malformation, and the number of children born is considerably above the average.

FARM AND GARDEN.

COUNTRY HOMES.—Any country that has farms with groves of forest trees, with orchards, with vegetable and flower gardens, is beautiful and valuable. Without these no country, however rich in soil and location, is attractive. Every dollar spent in trees and flowers will add ten dollars to the value of the home.

CARE OF SHEEP.—If, after the wool has grown to some considerable length, the sheep or lambs become annoyed with flies or ticks, immerse the lambs in a strong decoction of tobacco. Another way is to take a pair of bellows and inhale tobacco smoke, then blowing the smoke with considerable force amongst the ticks. This will prove instant death.

HOP-PICKING MACHINE.—A successful hop-picking machine has been employed this season in the hop-growing districts of England that does the work of from thirty to forty expert pickers. It consists of two rubber rollers so constructed as to draw in the branch, while two steel rollers, having an opposite action, pick the hops from it. The machine is about the size of an ordinary clothes wringer, is propelled by means of a treadle, and runs as easily as a light sewing machine.

FATTENING OF FOWLS.—It takes ten days or two weeks to fatten fowls. When a lot is put up, see that they all agree and do not abuse some one or more of the number, as sometimes happens. For the first two days they should not be fed too freely, but after that they should have all they will eat three times a day. The best feed is mush made of corn meal and then wetted with thick milk. Some coarse sand or gravel should be mixed with their feed once a day, or given separately. Charcoal broken into bits the size of wheat grains or a little larger may very properly be mixed with the feed three times a week. Give plenty of fresh, clean water to drink after each feed.

A CONVENIENT MEASURE.—To aid the farmers to arrive at accuracy in estimating the amount of land in different fields under cultivation, the following table is given: Five yards wide by 968 contains one acre; ten yards wide by 484 contains one acre; twenty yards wide by 242 long contains one acre; forty yards wide by 121 long contains one acre; seventy yards wide by 69¾ long contains one acre; eighty yards wide by 60½ long contains one acre; sixty feet wide by 726 long contains one acre; one hundred and ten feet wide by 297 long contains one acre; one hundred and thirty feet wide by 363 long contains one acre; two hundred and twenty feet wide by 181½ long contains one acre; four hundred and forty feet wide by 99 long contains one acre.

A MAP OF THE FARM.—Every farmer should have a complete map of his farm, with each field, pasture and wood lot, together with all the fences, roads and ditches, plainly drawn, and numbered or named, so they can be readily designated. Few farmers can appreciate the real value of one until they have tried the experiment, for with a map of the farm before you, you can direct your workmen to any part of it without the probability of their making a mistake. You can plan your improvements and estimate their cost at your leisure, instead of spending half a day of valuable time in surveying the land itself. It should be about two feet square, or larger if desired, and drawn on thick card board to prevent its being torn and defaced. Let our farmers try the experiment; they will soon learn its value. All necessary surveys may be made when other farm work is not pressing, and the map be drawn and the lots numbered in the winter evenings.

FEMININITIES.

The girl of the period sits at the window watching for the "coming man."

If a lady runs against you in the street, apologize. She expects it. It is the custom of the country.

Pythens, the daughter of Aristotle, being asked which is the most beautiful color, answered, "That of modesty."

Next to a seal skin sacque, nothing will please a woman of thirty so much as to be mistaken for her neice of sixteen.

If women are really angels, why don't they fly over a fence instead of making such a fearfully awkward job of climbing?

St. Columba, of old, when asked to bless a soldier's sword, replied, "Heaven grant, then, it may never shed a drop of blood."

"The strongest propensity in a woman's nature," says a careful student of the sex, "is to want to know what is going on, and the next thing is to boss the job."

In China the natives believe that when a woman dies her soul will pass into the body of some animal, and after many changes, she will at length become a man.

"Remember, now," said an Indiana bride at the altar, "we have separated and been re-married four times, and about once more will convince me that we can never live happily together."

A woman hearing a good deal about "preserving autumn leaves," put up some, but afterwards told a neighbor they were not fit to eat, and she might as well have thrown her sugar away.

There may be a certain advantage in marrying a deaf and dumb woman, but when she calls you all sorts of names and says mean things to you with her fingers, it makes you wish she could talk for a little while, anyhow.

Elderly gentleman, traveling abroad, politely to middle-aged spinster. "And where, may I ask, are you going next?" Middle-aged spinster, "Oh! Let me see! I am going to Geneva!" Elderly gentleman, "Going to Geneva! Why you are in Geneva!" Middle-aged spinster, "Am I, really? Oh, then I am going to Milan!"

GOOD WISHES.

BY R. E. KNOLE.

To all a Merry Christmas!
To all a glad New Year!
And may the Truth forever,
In Beauty's guise appear.
And Justice share with Mercy,
The heart-glow of the good;
All tender links of Duty,
Unite in Brotherhood.

To all a Merry Christmas!
To all a glad New Year!
The Past, as teaching angel
To human hearts appear;
The Present, wisely guided,
Lead upward to Life's goal;
Bright foregleams of the Future,
With Peace endow the soul!

SYLVIA;

—OR—

The Fernley Pride.

CHAPTER XXIII—[CONTINUED.]

"Which brings us back to the beginning," I said, laughing. "Lisa tells me she's not honest. It would break my heart to find myself deceived in her."

"It would break mine too," Eustace remarked in an odd tone.

I looked up. He was regarding her fixedly, strangely regardless that by so doing he was evidently giving her great pain, more than mere embarrassment.

"Lisa," I said, "what is it, darling?"—for the struggle with her feelings made her shed tears. To my surprise—for she was not demonstrative—she caught me round the neck and kissed me.

"I—I'm not very well to day; I've over worked myself lately," she replied and smiled and sobbed almost together, in a whimsical manner.

"Stay, Lisa!" said Eustace, advancing.

"No—go, Lisa!" I cried, releasing her; and with one of her rapid flitting movements she left the room.

"I wish you had not let her go just then," Eustace said moodily, as the door closed on her.

"Why?" I asked indignantly. "Because it pleased you to sit and 'eye her over,' like Mr. Tappertit? I have never seen you so rude and cruel before, Eustace."

"I think now, I was like the Ancient Mariner, and 'fixed her with my glittering eye,'" he said complacently. "If you had not spoilt it, you would have heard something strange just then, I fancy. Look here, Sylvia—I need not ask you to be kind to her, for that you can't help being: but have her with you a good deal, will you, and pet her?"

"I don't see why, but I don't see why not. She's a little darling!"

"She's great fun—as good as a play," he said carelessly, upsetting by his *nonchalance* a certain match-making scheme which occurred to me. It was certain that the independent little puss was not quite untouched by Eustace's attractions, in spite of her lofty assumption of indifference; and, as days passed, and he seemed to be watching her, I hoped the flame was mutual. It was rather provoking then to find that she always avoided him.

My mother and I moved farther apart. I felt now that it was a mistake that we had ever met. I was not necessary to her comfort, as long as she had her rich dresses, her dainty fare, her galeties, and friends. Among the train of these was a youth I particularly disliked, Mr. Cadman was a specimen of the *feuncsse doree* which disgraces London as well as Paris. Young in years, old in vice, rich, yet addicted to the lowest society, as his manners and conversation testified, too wise to believe in the existence of a single virtue, too simple not to believe the deepest wickedness to be "life," he was born to become the dupe of the worst of his associates. He worshipped at my mother's shine, though, with frankness above all praise, he often audibly avowed that he was not sure whether he was most "spoons" on her or some music-hall singer. This gentleman's visits I refused at last, thereby greatly angering her.

My husband was still abroad—it seemed that that episode of my life was over. If he returned to England, I supposed some express arrangement for an understood separation would be made: but I dreaded to look forward to or back on that subject, and whatever suffering had to be endured was borne in silence.

Whether that instinct told me that Lord Towerscourt, young, rich, handsome as he was, could find no sweeter, purer companion than Lisa Gilbert, the little, hard-working artist, or that Satan, finding me with idle hands, put that work into them, I know not, but my fingers tingled to weave their intimacy into life-long companionship—and yet I respected them too much to dare to meddle. What help I could honestly give my plot I did, by forcing her to take a holiday now and then, luring her with all sorts of wiles to leave her workshop and give the day to me and liberty and Eustace. The chestnuts in Bushey Park, the river at Richmond; Hampton's charming old palace, Windsor's castle—any place within a few hours' journey was seized upon as an excuse for a little idle happiness, and I hoped love in idleness would come.

How tired I would sometimes feel while they were fresh! How charming it was to see them linger a little together before they rejoined me, with quite unnecessary haste and many apologies! I think he did not more enjoy Lisa's vehement blushes when, through their pleasant dawdling together, we once lost a train which was to have taken that severely practical young person back to keep an important business engagement. Yet sometimes I trembled too. It was not so pleasant when now and then Lisa would nestle close to my side and whisper that she did not mean to talk. I should have welcomed the action, the words, except that it was often plain her thoughts were not happy ones during our silent companionship. I believe the girl suffered agony during those times. And Eustace seemed often with other than lover-like thoughts in his mind, even when he sought her most.

"Has it ever occurred to you that Lisa is rather queer in her manner to you?" he asked me one day, after we had seen her back to her dismal apartment, after a day spent in the air and sunshine. I was struck by this question—I had often thought so myself. "Do you think pride alone makes her reject any service at your hands and yet anxious to do everything for you? You may not buy a picture of her, you may not make her a present. That child has set her heart upon buying an annuity—the dear little stupid!—for her father, to prevent his living on you; and, Sylvia, she always calls you 'Mrs. Fernley,' never recognises the relationship, and yet she is very fond of you."

"What do you want me to think?" I asked, startled by his manner.

"Nothing—I am going to find out."

"Eustace, one moment. Be careful how you trifle with Lisa. Analysis of character may be a delightful study, but does the subject of that deep study understand your motive? There is a command against 'seething the kid in its mother's milk.'"

He looked at my hesitating face; and then one of the old sensitive blushes dyed his.

From that day he redoubled his attentions to Lisa. Stranger than that was his new-born interest in my uncle and mother; he left no pains untried to be with them, to talk, to flatter them with a show of interest, till I, who knew his real opinion about them, grew troubled and displeased.

CHAPTER XXIV.

My mother was indignant that we had stayed in London though the summer. That was owing to Lisa, she would not take her holiday till she had completed some commissions she had undertaken, and I would not go without her. My mother was out that evening as usual, and by my own wish I remained at home. Regret, sadness, sick longing filled my heart as I sat in the dim London drawing-room; I believed myself quite alone, or I should not have yielded to them so utterly, and I started as if roused by a trumpet at the sound of a soft broken voice.

"I will speak now—I will keep it back no longer."

Lisa Gilbert and Eustace stood in the doorway, both looking towards me. I put down my handkerchief, got up hastily, and went towards them, muttering something about "low spirits," and then saw there was something strange about them—Eustace was ardent and excited, Lisa pale and trembling. Was my wish realised? Then Eustace said, with a singular kind of gentleness—

"Will you not sit down with Lisa, Sylvia? She has something to tell you."

"Let me speak first, Lisa, Sylvia ought to know that you have never reaped anything from her misfortune; but with a strength and courage few people possess, you cut yourself off."

"Hush! Please don't palliate my conduct; directly I knew all, I ought to have spoken—I know that. I will not keep you in suspense any longer, Mrs. Fernley. You will be glad to know as quickly as possible that we are in no way related to you, neither my father, myself, nor—my aunt Julia."

"Lisa, are you mad?"

"The person you call your mother is really only the widow of Paul Massey, though indeed it was only lately that I heard that; it was a fresh grief to know you owed a sorrowful childhood to one of us. We all thought the bandit! stole you, and not the injured husband of my aunt Julia."

Then she was silent for a few moments.

"It was a plot, Mrs. Fernley," she continued, "and it has succeeded in destroying your life's happiness. Your real mother died long ago, and you are not the daughter of a bad woman." The piquant face was hidden, the sweet voice faltered. "Oh, do tell your cousin, Lord Towerscourt—I cannot! All the misery has come through our most wicked family."

"Speak again—swear it this time!" I seized her arm. She looked into my face.

"I swear that my aunt Julia Massey, whom during nearly four years you have believed to be your mother, is no relation to you; that a plot was formed to make you believe her so, partly from revenge, partly for the sake of gain."

Between them I heard the whole sad story: some of it was better explained afterwards, but it may as well be set down here:

My father married in Italy a young but portionless English girl, and settled there with her. Soon after my birth she met with a fall, injured her spine, and became an invalid for life; he had been much attached to her, and his disappointment was heavy. Lively, and fond of society, he soon tired of the monotony and confinement entailed by a chronic illness, and sought amusements away from home.

About that time he fell in with an old college friend, then just in orders—the Reverend William Gilbert, who had then stayed with him his sister, recently separated from her husband, but passing herself off as still single. With this woman father fell in love; and when, a year after, my mother died suddenly of heart-disease, accelerated by her spinal disorder, with indecent haste he persuaded Julia Massey to marry him almost immediately after the funeral.

Julia Massey was reluctant to commit the crime of bigamy, but saw no other way of possessing herself of the wealth she coveted, and therefore still deluded my father by the belief that she was a single woman, trusting to her knowledge of her husband's habits that he would never seek her abroad. Two days after their marriage my father met his sister, Mrs. Escombe, at Florence, and ashamed of confessing that he had been so quickly consoled for the loss of my mother, never mentioned that she was dead, leaving Mrs. Escombe to believe that the beautiful woman with him was my mother.

My father discovered the imposition played upon him. When the wretched Massey heard in England a rumor of the truth, and, still longing madly for his wife, came to Venice, confronted him, and claimed his wife at his hand. In that interview he discovered all. His character was stern and implacable. He cast off the imposter, but, too proud to acknowledge the extent of his infatuation even to a fellow-sufferer, allowed Massey to believe to the last that Julia was his mistress. This false shame forbade his revealing to his sister the conduct of the woman he had presented to be his wife, and brought about much of our trouble. To revenge himself Massey stole me. When Julia was cast off, her brother, by protestations of his innocence, retained his place in my father's house, and accompanied him back to England. Then followed the long search for the lost child, the campaign in the Crimea, and the return home to die.

Before death my father wrote out a clear account of the two marriages, so as to leave no obstacle in the way of his daughter if she should be found; but the inveterate pride of his nature again stepped in, and, to avoid the shame of the discovery while living, he placed the manuscript in the desk with other papers to be opened after his death. His secretary and companion found this out, saw a way of making it useful in the event of Massey's death, and stole the packet, sent it to his sister, and replaced in the desk a miniature of her, with a bundle of my mother's letters.

Till Massey's death the packet was of no use, and the terms of my father's will—made public—prevented either of the conspirators being the wealthier for this scheme, except through the natural feeling of a girl deceived with thinking that she was assisting a distressed parent, or the jealous fear of a man proud of his honor, and ready to pay them well to keep the secret of his association with shame and disgrace.

The wretched woman's life after my father had cast her off was infamous. Far from concealing this, she courted the scrutiny of my husband; and the discoveries he made for himself in Venice added the last drop to his cup of bitter shame.

The rest was easy to make out—no need for Lisa to hide her crimsoned face, for Eustace to turn pale and falter. Large as had been her allowance, it was not sufficient for the woman I had thought my mother. She knew how my property was settled, and thought that, if I was in her hands entirely, larger funds would be at her disposal. Ill fortune made me send Towerscourt to discover her: she guessed something of his feelings, and the false telegram, the beseeching letter, were concocted to betray me into her power, and fatally compromise my reputation in my husband's eyes. If the flood had not succeeded in detaining me at the house, another expedient would have been tried and, if that project had failed, they would, have striven till the deed was done. My poor maddened Jessa gladly lent herself to my release, as she was taught to think it.

This was the story told between those two with faltering tongues, whispered tones, and sad, eloquent pauses.

Lisa uttered not one word as to her own sufferings and hardships, yet I knew, as if I had heard it from her, how she had striven with wrong-doing, and urged justice.

Her simple attitude was unaltered: at times, when her story had been particularly painful, Eustace had taken her hand, but she had always withdrawn it quickly. Her little head was bent dejectedly; she seemed to see something sorrowful before her.

"My gain is your loss, Lisa," I said softly, as I stooped and kissed her pale cheek.

"Not in reality, as I knew much of this long ago; but to disclose it to you has been painful," she returned patiently. And then for the first time she turned to Eustace and said, with a quivering smile, "But I am glad that you made me tell it; I shall be more grateful still some day, I know. Thank you for standing by me."

"Do you know why I have been so anxious for you to tell it, over and above my wish to see Sylvia righted?"

"No," she said wonderingly, and a little frightened, for his eyes dwelt on her passionately, and his whole face was working with emotion.

"Because I have learnt to love you darling—because I want you for my wife, Lisa"—and fervent love sounded in the tones of his voice.

"Oh, at what a time to tell me so!" she cried, and dropped her face upon her hands. "Don't speak so," she said wearily. "You are always kind, but you are excited now; of course I should not listen to you if you really meant it."

He took her in his arms suddenly.

"Lisa, my darling, if you will look in my face and say you do not believe me, and do not love me, I will never speak of love to you again. Sylvia, bear me witness."

He held her to his breast, and bent over the little shame-stricken face hiding there; she paused so for a moment, and then slipped out of his arms and threw herself into mine.

"Tell him it cannot be," she sobbed. "He is noble, generous—he tries to heal my sore heart—but it must not be. Tell your cousin it would have been bad enough to marry beneath him, but infamy too—"

"I know nothing about it, Lisa," I said, as she clung tremblingly to me; "but I think he knows his own mind better than you or I do."

"You do not think it would injure him?" she asked, starting back and looking at me as if she would pierce to my inmost thoughts.

"To marry you? No, I do not. Shall I tell him so?"

"Ah, no! I will speak to him myself."

He was kneeling close beside her; she looked at him hesitatingly, while slowly disengaging herself from me.

"I love you dearly—dearly!" she said; and as he clasped her she put her little hands to his neck.

"My sweet, sweet, brave, true girl!" he uttered fervently. "This day, which has been so sad to you, has made me the very happiest fellow in England. I've won a peerless girl for my wife, and I love and respect her to my heart's core. Kiss my little wife, Sylvia; but I cannot spare her out of my arms yet."

As we stood rejoicing together the door was flung open, and Mr. Gilbert and she I have called my mother sailed into the room.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE WHALE.—Although the whale is seventy feet in length, his food consists only of small or minute animals, allied to jelly fishes and the like, a herring being the largest fish he can swallow. To procure his prey he is thus obliged to engulf a whole shoal in his capacious mouth at once. The water is then strained off and poured through the blow-holes, while the animal can pass his diminutive prey into the throat as he requires. It may be thus seen that the whalebone plates serve as a kind of gigantic sieve or strainer. These plates generally number about 600. The sperm whales possess no whalebone plates. With an ignorance of science which now is laughable even to our children, who know that the material for stays and hoops is taken from the mouth, the law in the time of Charles II. appropriated the tail of every whale taken by an English subject to the use of the queen for the supply of the royal wadrobe.

THE LICKING OF THUMBS.—The pressure of moistened thumbs, as the solemn ratification of a marriage agreement was customary in Scotland in the last century, and was also used in other contracts. The practice, as confirmatory of an agreement, existed both among the Celts and Gothe. The records of the Scottish courts contain examples of sales being confirmed by the judges on the production of evidence that the parties had licked and pressed their thumbs on the occasion of a bargain.

THE USE OF BUTTER.—The European countries in which oil and butter are used may be extending along the Pyrenees, the Cevennes, and the Alps. In warm countries the place of butter, for the most part is supplied by oil. In Italy, Spain, Portugal and the south of France, butter is to be purchased in the shops of apothecaries, while the olive groves supersede the use of butter by that of oil.

LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

Fashion Notes, Queries and Fireside Chat.

The question "what to wear" is entirely absorbed in the interest which centres in "what to give;" for while many ingenious fingers can easily solve this problem by their skilful creation of something lovely for a gift, made doubly dear by its being one's own make, there are many others who have neither time nor skill to produce one of the many things Christmas giving calls for, and are compelled to turn to that vast dominion in which "Holiday Gifts" are found already made to suit everyone's taste and pocket. In this dominion, that ingenious dame Fashion has found a field for her fertile fancy to produce something which will represent her taste as well as the giver's good will in a pretty Christmas gift which can both adorn and be useful to our dress.

The lace pin is prominent as a useful and ornamental gift, and is the most acceptable accompaniment to the lovely lace which is used so much to adorn the throat, Fashion has fairly revelled in the field which has given so much scope to the exercise of taste and ingenuity. One represents a little gold broom, another a riding whip with cap; a bar of gold holds suspended little pendants lettered with the pretty legend Bonheur. What could be more pretty as a gift than something which is always suggesting "happiness?" A shamrock leaf in enameled gold rests on the centre of a spear of grass. A cluster of gold enameled daisies in all their freshness is mingled with a branch of delicate lilies of the valley and leaves.

An unique design is a closed umbrella with a pearl on the end of the handle; while another suggestive design is a quill pen held in a folded book. An oddity in design is a snail resting on a blade of grass, and another one represents a gold ladder with mouse and frog crawling towards each other. A curious pin is a clam shell on a catkin stalk, and one especially odd represents an open mussel shell holding a tiny fish and a pearl, and catkin stalks and grass. A lovely pin was a sceptre passed through a tiny crown of pearls and turquoise. A delicate filigree butterfly rests on a bar of gold; on another the butterfly has distended wings studded with turquoise stones. Tiny Japanese fans are curiously enameled and form a unique and pretty pin. Other fans with silver cord attached are half-open, showing some little fancy conceit engraved. A garden hat resting on a rake and crook is suggestively pretty. A large silver bee and a bunch of keys are also in the list of these ingenious designs, to produce which ingenuity has fairly run wild with delight. Other pins are more simple in their elegance, and many are very moderate in price, while the list of pretty pins in imitation of the real gold is quite as endless.

The chatelaine bag is another acceptable gift, to which Fashion has given her marked approval as an article of use and adornment, by providing it in all materials to suit one's dress and style. In silk, satin, and velvet they present the most exquisite designs; the monogram is embroidered in bullion silver and gold, or a delicate cluster of flowers gracefully ornaments one corner. Others are in striped satin, in gold and garnet, or blue, or cream, and with these a belt and portmonnaie are added to correspond. Another style is in fragrant Russian leather, the most lovely of which are creamy white, and on the surface a little bunch of violets of embossed velvet, representing the tiny purple flowers and leaves, with stems tied with a cord to increase its wonderful imitation of the real, the fragrance of the violets is keenly perceptible, and makes it appear like a little bouquet some one has simply fastened there for the moment. These are accompanied by little portmonnaies with the same design. An exquisite turquoise blue kid bag had a bunch of forget-me-nots and leaves embossed in the same style, while a delicate tilleul satin held on its surface a cluster of moss roses.

The favorite bracelet seems to be the serpent, forming a succession of coils around the arm, with its jeweled head turned up towards the shoulder. A thin delicate band is passed through a jeweled arrow, while the bangles are in every variety of style in which eccentric taste and novelty finds expression in the jingling pendants which make one jingle wherever one goes.

In French jewelry Mr. Wanamaker secured some of the new necklets made from Etruscan patterns; they are in red gold, so much affected in Paris. The necklet is composed of a series of medallions, each one pierced in a classical pattern, and linked to the next by chains.

Some new Breton ornaments are also pretty.

The latest silver ornamtnts are Grecian in style; they fit closely round the throat with pendant drops, and are in bright nickel as well as in dull oxydised silver.

Some floral ornaments, made of frosted silver, with burnished gold leaves, are novel and have the merit of being strong.

Breton pins for the hair in red gold and yellow gold and pearls, butterflies on quivering stems, a clever combination of mother-of-pearl, steel, and black velvet, are among the newest ornaments for the hair.

Mr. Wanamaker has applied the new Breton lace, plaited in the finest kiltings, to caps, neck bows, fichus, etc. The novelty in these articles is that they are all made of the soft India muslin, the lace being sewn on without any insertion, even to dress handkerchiefs. The bows for wearing at the neck have only one end, and are very large; while many of the frills for going round the throat have long ends of the lace-edged muslin, which are to be carelessly arranged on the front of the bodice.

A double scarf for wearing about the shoulders is gathered slightly in the centre of the back, and the ends coming to the front are draped as softly and carelessly as possible. A pair of sleeves made in India muslin and Breton lace, intended to be tacked into the short sleeves of an evening dress, are so rounded that they fall over the elbow, while in front they are cut up nearly to the shoulder.

Our Fireside Chat.

"Christmas comes but once a year,
And when it comes, it brings good cheer."

Christmas feasting forms a prominent part of "Christmas Merrymaking" and calls forth all the skill of the busy housewives to prepare the many pleasant and tempting things with which they love to adorn the Christmas feast. It is the season when we extend a share of our joys and pleasures to others with a hospitality we might not exercise again through the year. Of these real festive occasions what should be borne in mind is, that true hospitality in a dinner or feast consists in giving as far as possible, what will be eaten, and not what merely looks best or is the most convenient. It is almost needless to say that the dishes which form a part of the Christmas feast are roast beef, or roast turkey, plum pudding and mince pies, to which are added other dishes at discretion. In regard to the turkey there is an old English legend which says:

"Turkey boiled is turkey spoiled,
And turkey roast is turkey lost,
But for turkey braised the Lord be praised,"

but while there are undoubted facts which prove the truth of it, much can be said in favor of turkey roasted or boiled.

The first dish on the list of prominent interest is roast beef, for which the joints most in favor are the middle cut of the sirloin and the wing, and three or four of the next ribs, but failing to prepare the middle cut the long ribs boned and rolled will make a handsome piece. The manner of roasting either is a matter of taste, but a careful basting and a guard against its being overdone are the most essential things to remember. Horse radish sauce is considered quite a desirable addition to roast beef, and the following is an approved recipe: Beat a quarter of a pound of butter to a cream, and gradually and thoroughly incorporate with it a gill of thick cream. Stir in two tablespoonfuls of horseradish, grated very finely; add by degrees a dessertspoonful of white vinegar, or as much as will give the sauce a slight acidity; add pepper and salt to taste, and keep the sauce in a cold place until required for use.

A very nice way of preparing potatoes is in the form of croquettes. It is necessary that potatoes for croquettes should be cooked as dry as possible, and they will answer best when baked or steamed. Pass a dozen cooked potatoes through a sieve, add to this the yolk of an egg and pepper and salt to taste. Flour your left hand and roll a piece of the potato into a small ball, pass it through finely sifted crumbs, then through beaten egg, and again through crumbs. Place in the wire basket as you do croquettes, and fry in hot fat a light brown. Should it be too soft to bind well, stir it until stiff over the fire; if, on the contrary, it is dry and friable, add the white as well as the yolk of the egg.

Braised Turkey.—And now we will proceed to braised turkey, which should be made as follows: Make a good forcemeat of pork as follows: Mince in a machine three pounds of fat pork (or two pounds of lean to one of fat) mix together a quarter pound of bread crumbs, three teaspoonsful of salt, two small teaspoonsful of dried and sifted sweet herbs, and the same quantity of black pepper; add this to the meat, and mix the whole with two eggs. Press as much of this forcemeat as you can into the crop of the turkey, reserving the remainder for garnishing balls. If fresh mushrooms are to be had, trim and peel one pound and put them with one half pound of bacon fat (that which is made in toasting bacon) into the body of the turkey, and fasten it up securely. Preserved mushrooms may be substituted for fresh. Fasten thin slices of fat bacon over the breast with twine. Cover the bottom of the braising pan to a depth of an inch with carrots, turnips, and onions cut up small; add the mushroom trimmings, one pound of lean ham, one pound of fat bacon, and enough water to cover the whole. Let this boil gently for an hour, then place the turkey on the vegetables, and allow it to cook slowly for two hours, a little more or less according to its size. When done, remove the bacon from the breast, which brush over with good rich glaze, and put the turkey either before the fire; or in the roasting oven for five minutes; pour round the dish a rich gravy, and garnish with fried balls made of the remainder of the forcemeat.

I will not enter into an elaborate description of the method of preparing glaze, beyond describing it as a good rich stock boiled down till it has the appearance of liquid glue, but in making it great care should be taken in not allowing it to remain too long on the fire. When ready take a stiff brush and paint the fowl all over, making the breast particularly shiny; the wonderful improvement in appearance fully repays one for the labor.

For roast turkey a stuffing of chestnuts which gives it a delicious flavor is prepared as follows: For a large turkey take about sixty large chestnuts, fry them in a little fat for a short time until their husks open, and can be removed with the inner skin; then boil them in some soup stock until quite tender, or some salted water with a couple of bay leaves; mince one pound of fat bacon; a couple of small shalots, and give them a turn on the fire, then add the chestnuts cut up into moderate pieces; mixed with pepper, salt, spices to taste and a little thyme and marjoram; give this mixture another turn on the fire and then insert it in the turkey.

Oyster patties are an acceptable entree and add much to the Christmas dinner. The recipe is not difficult to follow. The outside case is made of a rich puff paste baked in a plain deep tin mould, and a piece of the paste is arranged on top as the cover, which is removed so as to place the prepared oysters inside the case, after which the cover is then replaced for serving. Two dozen good-sized oysters, opened so as to procure all their juice, remove the beards and place them in a small stew pan with the juice; rinse the oysters in half a pint of milk, and pour this milk into the stewpan to extract the flavor from the beards. Strain this carefully and throw aside the beards, and thicken with equal quantities of flour and butter, which have been carefully blended together; the thickness should be equal to a thick cream. Add a little red pepper, a teaspoonful of anchovy sauce, a little black pepper, a little nutmeg, and a saltspoon of lemon juice. Scald the oysters and cut each into three or four pieces, and add the thickened liquid, stirring and beating it all together in the saucepan, but without boiling. When hot add the yolks of two eggs, and when thoroughly mixed and very hot fill the empty case with the mixture and put in the oven until the paste is thoroughly reheated.

While on the subject of oysters I will refer to a method of preparing them in a delicious form, which has been favored with the name of "flying angel." Cut a dozen pieces of stale bread about the size of a silver dollar, and fry them a nice brown color; drain them and add to each one a small piece of anchovy sauce. Cut some round pieces of bacon as thin as a wafer and fry just enough to cook them; lay them on the bread and place on each piece of bacon a roasted oyster.

Perhaps the deepest anxiety of the dinner concerns the plum pudding, so I will give a recipe which has always proved satisfactory, and is not as rich as the English formula: Soak a loaf of stale bread for a few minutes in cold water and then roll it in a napkin for two hours, then crumble it thoroughly and mix with one-fourth pound of suet chopped very fine and creamy, add to this a small bowl of currants, thoroughly washed and dried, and the same quantity of stoned raisins; one-half teaspoonful of ground cloves, the same of allspice, a pinch of ground mace. To this add two tablespoonsful of molasses, the juice of one orange, and the peel grated; one-fourth pound of citron chopped very fine. Mix all these ingredients thoroughly together, and add six eggs well beaten. To be boiled in a pudding bag two hours, and serve with a sauce of butter and sugar, flavored with brandy and nutmeg.

The following is an approved recipe for the genuine English black plum pudding: Take six ounces of finely chopped suet, six ounces of stoned raisins, three ounces of sultanas, six ounces of picked and washed currants, half a pound of peeled and chopped apples, four ounces of sugar, three ounces of grated bread crumbs, three ounces of flour, half an ounce of blanched and two bitter almonds grated, half an ounce of spices, cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger; three ounces of chopped mixed peel, half a pint of milk, two wine glasses of brandy, and six eggs. Beat up the eggs and well together, mix the milk with them, grees, then the other ingredients, working them to a smooth paste. Dip a cloth into boiling water, put it on a sieve, flour it, tie the pudding well up in it, and boil in plenty of water from ten to twelve hours. If made the day before, boil ten hours the first day; when wanted plunge it into boiling water, and boil for three hours more; pour half a pint of warm brandy in the dish, and light it as it is set on the table, and serve with sugar and butter beaten to a cream and flavored with brandy and nutmeg.

Mince pies are so familiar to all experienced housewives, any recipe seems almost superfluous, but a few hints may prove acceptable to the inexperienced. The prepared mince meat which has become so generally used obviates one of the most onerous parts of making mince pies, so allowing in this case that the prepared meat is used, we will suggest the following: The fruit should generally be double the quantity of meat, and little contributions from the various preserved sweetmeats add much to the richness and flavor of the whole. For example, a tablespoonful of strawberries, currant jelly, raspberries, cherries, and plums, or more of each if it can be spared from the jars, have a wonderful effect in their flavoring presence. A mince pie is false to itself when poor in flavor and plain in quality.

In the above directions I have only mentioned what would be simple and not expensive, and while one may not wish to experiment with all these recipes at once, they are good enough to be kept until wanted.

In conclusion, let me add that we should make the Christmas feasting a blessing to others as well as ourselves. They will doubly enjoy their own dinner who can think of some one who, but for them, would have gone without.

ARTIFICIAL BLACK WALNUT.—A Belgian journal says a new process has been applied to the manufacture of artificial black walnut, by which ordinary wood has imparted to it the appearance of the most beautiful specimens of walnut, adapted to the very finest cabinet work. The wood, first thoroughly dried and warmed, is coated once or twice with a liquid composed of one part by weight of walnut peel, dissolved in six parts of soft water, by heating it to boiling, and stirring. The wood thus treated is, when half dried, brushed with a solution of one part by weight of bichromate of potash in five parts of boiling water, and, after drying thoroughly, is rubbed and polished. The color is thus said to be fixed in the wood to a depth of one or two lines, and, in the case of red beech or alder, for instance, the walnut appearance is most excellent.

Ladies will be interested in knowing that fur-lined cloaks have been worn in Poland by peddlers for the last one hundred years.

ANSWERS TO INQUIRERS

J. S. (Kaufman, Texas.)—The pronunciation of Khedive is Kaydeeve.

MAJOR (Preble, O.)—By all means write a full explanation of your conduct to the young lady.

FLORIAN (Phila., Pa.)—You require a much better education than you possess, in order to become an actress.

SUBSCRIBER (Marley's Mills, N. C.)—A letter addressed to "Arthur's Home Magazine, Phila.," will reach them.

J. M. H. (Davis, Kans.)—Barbers in former times were sometimes surgeons, and were accustomed to bleed people.

C. L. (Darlington, S. C.)—True love is just as you describe it, and you describe it so well there can be no doubt that your heart experiences it.

FOURTH R. (Keene, Ill.)—You have made some mistake to ask "whether friendship can exist without amity." The terms are synonymous.

MIRA (Phila., Pa.)—You are not too old to commence learning music. Strong alkalis are used to lighten the color of the hair; and they are most perfidious.

S. E. (East Claire, Pa.)—When a young gentleman has been refused by a young lady, it would be more delicate for him to abstain from calling at the house in future.

T. M. (Monmouth, N. J.)—Ask the young lady for an explanation of her coolness, requesting to know whether you had given her any offence. Then act according to her reply.

READER (Johnson, Ark.)—The starboard is the right side of the ship, looking towards the head; the larboard is the left; "port the helm" means, put the helm over to the larboard.

SALTASH (Eldrale, Md.)—Wedding breakfasts consist of cold fowl, hams, tongues, pigeon pies, lobster salads, rolled veal, &c., to the guests. The bride does not present gloves.

INQUIRER (Windham, Conn.)—We are unable to answer your first question. A lemon sliced in brown sugar, or a mixture of lemon juice and honey will clear the voice for singing.

HELENA (Dunn, Wis.)—It is difficult to advise you how to break yourself of the habit of biting your nails. A strong resolve, earnestly adopted, can be carried out, unless the person be very weak-minded.

FIDELIO (Brownville, Pa.)—From the measurement you give the gentleman would probably require a No. 8 glove. 2.—We think your writing very fair and legible. As to your nervousness you should consult a physician.

F. M. L. (Shelby, Ky.)—If the lady knew nothing as you say, of the note of invitation waiting her at home she was right in accepting the invitation of the young man who met her on her return, and he should have her company on the occasion.

J. NICKERSON (Greene, Mo.)—No oil or pomade will thicken the eyebrows. Neither can you very easily darken them with a dye, so as to prevent the skin from showing the stain. The only plan is to pencil the brow with black or brown cosmetic.

KEITH (Washtenaw, Mich.)—There is no meaning whatever in any gentleman sending a lady a glove which he supposes to have been lost by her: it is a mere act of ordinary courtesy. Neither of the names you mention have any particular signification.

JANE (Brevard, Fla.)—It is rather early for a young lady between fourteen and fifteen to be in love; but nevertheless many girls of that age do fall in love, or fancy they do—and while the fancy lasts, it is pretty much the same thing as if it were actual love.

E. Y. (Luzerne, Pa.)—You certainly are acting prudently in not going near the abode of the young gentleman, nor in anywise throwing yourself in his way. But whether he really loves you or not, we cannot properly surmise. If he does, he will no doubt soon tell you.

C. D. (Davidson, Tenn.)—You seem to be an honest and industrious young man, and on the road to competence and a comfortable old age. Therefore, if the young lady is willing to unite her destiny with yours, invoke the aid of the clergyman at once and be made as happy as you expect to be.

SKEPTICAL (Herkimer, N. Y.)—You are quite right to institute the most searching inquiry into every advertisement for a "secretary" before you take any more serious step. A public company that is founded on anything like a serious basis, seldom wants to advertise for a secretary: it is usually provided beforehand.

ANGIE (Springfield, Mich.)—The firm is reliable. They still sell the instrument you speak of, which is a pleasing and useful toy. It is however, well worth what is generally asked for it. Mary means "bitter;" Margaret "a pearl;" Carrie, which is the diminutive of Clara, "clear or bright," and Elizabeth, "the oath of God."

L. F. (Wrightsville, Ark.)—We would suppose the maker of the article would give you the necessary information where to have the gold pen repaired, but if he has not yet answered your letter you might inquire of any jeweler of your acquaintance. If he could not repair it himself he could inform you where you could get it done.

DEBATE (Ripley, Miss.)—St. Peter's Church at Rome, required for its erection 176 years, and to complete the structure an addition of 12½ years. Its cost was $50,000,000 in gold, and to keep it in repair requires an expenditure annually of $700,000. Of its vast dimensions perhaps the best idea is conveyed by the statement that it covers about eight acres of ground.

FAITH (Mercer, O.)—On no account write or renew the acquaintance. The vice of untruthfulness is fatal to every chance of happiness. Forget the object of misplaced confidence, but do not either send to say that you intend to do so or inquire about the letters. You are well out of the affair. Do not run the risk of having your affections further entangled.

CLARINGHAM (Germantown, Pa.)—It is the essential principle of the inductive system of philosophy not to carry the inference beyond the limits of the lesson immediately learnt. All we can infer is that what has happened many times in succession will happen again; but it is a conjecture, so far as the first series of observations is concerned, to think the habit of sequence makes a law.

FOREMAN (Fremont, Iowa.)—We are inclined to think, judging from the tone of your letter, that you are too much inclined to think of handing in complaints of your men to your superiors, and that you are meeting with the fate which always overtakes such officious subordinates—namely, the hatred of your inferiors, and the dislike of your superiors. This, probably, may teach you the folly of the course, and lead to your reformation in the respect mentioned.

K. PROCTER (Warrick, Ind.)—There are divers contradictory stories of the origin of "Punch and Judy." It is said to have originated at the close of the sixteenth century, or beginning of the seventeenth, and to have become a popular show in England about the latter date. The name is probably derived from the Italian Pulcinella, but even with regard to this authorities differ. Some give the little drama a symbolical meaning. It is impossible to determine which account of the matter is most credible.

BONIFACE (Baltimore, Md.)—The custom of bob-nobbing, as it is called, is said to have originated in the days of Queen Elizabeth, thus: When great chimneys were in fashion, there was in each corner of the hearth or grate a small elevated projection called the bob, and behind it a seat. In the winter time the beer was placed on the bob to warm, and the cool beer was set on the table said to have been called the nob; so that the question "Will you bob or nob" simply refers to beer hot or cold.

QUERRIX (Silver, Wis.)—Your brother probably loves you as well as is necessary, and his apparent coldness in expressing it should not seem unnatural to you. If you were not so profuse yourself in endearments he might be willing to show you more affection. It is hardly the thing for a girl of your age to be anxious concerning the feeling which such a relation bears for her; in fact in many such demonstrations as you seem to indulge in, would excite disgust and perhaps a sharp rebuke.

PRESENT (Phila.)—One authority, writing of gems, says that the opal was accused of bringing ill luck upon the wearer on account of the fading off its colors. It is a fragile stone, easily fractured. Its iridescence being produced by the reflection and refraction of light imprisoned within specks in the gem, which are easily choked up with dust through wear, thus causing the color to apparently fade. It may be restored by gradually roasting the stone by uniform heat, but this operation requires great care.

ANGLICAN (Phila.)—"Arminianism" was the heresy of James Arminius of the sixteenth century, a Dutch divine who opposed the doctrine of Calvin that "the elect" could "not fall away from grace." He had also extraordinary views about original sin and free-will. Arianism takes its name from Arius, who, about 319, denied the Divinity of Christ. Antinomianism, as the term implies, denies the authority of law, and asserts that Christians are free from all restraints of Moses. This heresy existed in the time of the apostles, and is believed to be condemned in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

RASO (Putnam, Ga.)—The brother and parents of the young lady to whom you refer acted with perfect propriety in getting her home. But the matter of the unprincipled lover will be a difficult one to manage. If the girl's parents have not already laid a foundation of filial love and duty for her character to rest upon, mere arbitrary authority is seldom sufficient for such a case. Much wisdom and love and patience are necessary on the part of the average parents, together with that inflexible but gentle firmness, which restrains without giving offence.

LANGUE (Allegheny, Pa.)—The Chinese language is neither Aryan, Semitic, nor Turanian. Like Japanese, Australian, the American Indian and the South African tongues, it has not been placed by philologists in any class. Farrar, one of the latest authorities on the subject, calls these tongues Alophyllan—a convenient term, which simply means not belonging to any of the great families. Authentic history fails to trace the Mongolian to any son or grandson of Noah. Some believe Fohi, the traditional founder of the empire, to have been Noah himself. But the mythical history of China antedates the Noachic period, and in the reign of Yao, 286 years after Fohi, according to the records, occurred a great flood, which has been considered identical with the Scriptural Deluge. The fact is that the origin of the Chinese is veiled in great obscurity.

OCCUM (Tyrrel, N. C.)—The distances of but very few of the stars have been or ever can be measured; except by accurately observing their position with regard to other stars; and then six months after when the earth has made one half of a revolution around the sun, or in other words, has moved 185,000,000 of miles to the right or left of its former position, observations are again taken. And if there is no apparent change in the position, then we have no means of determining their distance; but if there should be a slight change of position, the same as there is when a person moves his head while looking at objects at different distances from him, the knowing the distance we have moved, and the amount of displacement produced, we may compute the relative distances of the objects. With those which have no apparent displacement, their distance is only a matter of reas